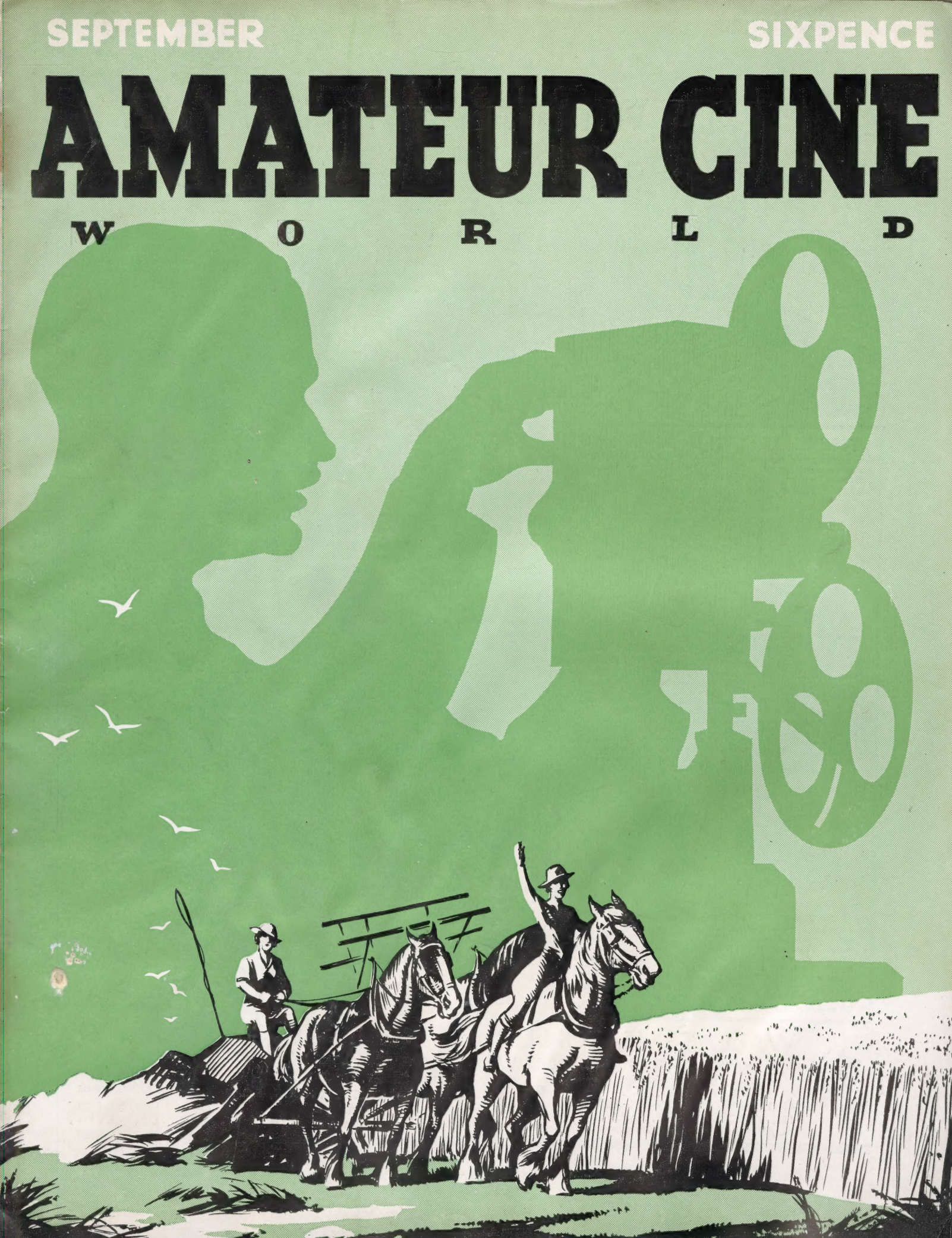
SEPTEMBER

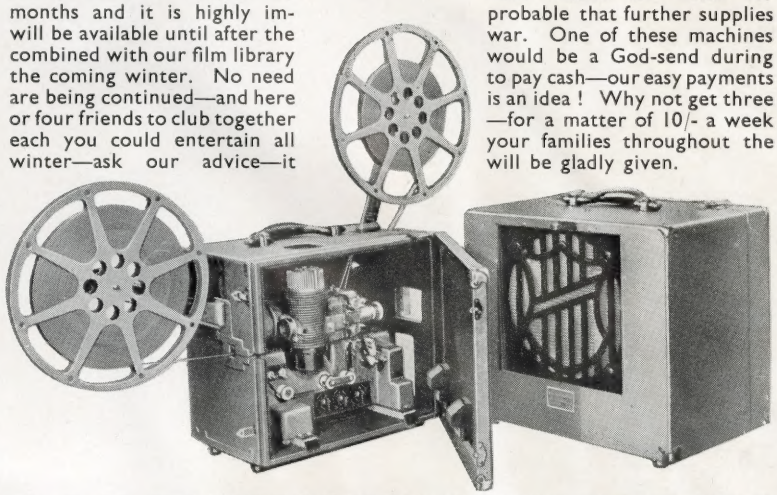
SIXPENCE

AMATEUR CINE WORLD



WHAT ABOUT NEXT WINTER?

In these days of uncertainty there is one thing which seems pretty certain—and it is that the war will continue throughout next winter. Last winter the one bright spot in the black-out was Talkies and Movies at home. It helped many a family cheerfully through. It is no use, however, waiting until the winter is here—by then the equipment may not be available. Especially in the case of talkies. We are fortunate in having a stock at the moment of the famous 'Filmosound' Talkies, in a choice of two models—we have waited for these for months and it is highly improbable that further supplies will be available until after the war. One of these machines combined with our film library would be a God-send during the coming winter. No need to pay cash—our easy payments are being continued—and here is an idea! Why not get three or four friends to club together—for a matter of 10/- a week each you could entertain all your families throughout the winter—ask our advice—it will be gladly given.



THERE IS STILL TIME . . .

to secure a new camera and make YOUR OWN FILMS for showing next winter. This will add a note of personal interest to your programme of library films.

EASY PAYMENTS AVAILABLE FOR ALL APPARATUS OVER 50/-.

PATHE "H" MOVIE CAMERA

The finest movie-maker on the market at such a low price. Has sweet, silent running clockwork motor. Special gate eliminates scratching of film. Has special device for taking single snapshots if desired. Fitted with f/2.5 lens in interchangeable mount. A wonderfully efficient outfit ... **£7 15 0**

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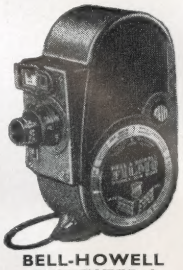

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Fitted with f/2.5 lens and 4 speeds, including slow motion. Designed to take interchangeable lenses for telephoto and other work. **£33 5 6**

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B. & H. FILMOSOUND "**UTILITY**" gives brilliant, uniformly illuminated picture. Pleasant, natural, musical quality and clear speech reproduction. A two-case machine. Has 750 watt illumination. Still and reverse device. Silent and sound speeds. Microphone circuit. Power rewind. 10 watt sound outfit, f/1.6 lens ... **£167 15 0**

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FILMOSOUND "MASTER." An ideal machine for clubs, large halls, hotels, etc., and for audiences of considerable size. Shows either silent or sound films. Takes 1,600 ft. reels for a 45 minute non-stop run. Has centralised controls. With 750 watt lamp and 25 watt sound output ... **£186 10 0**

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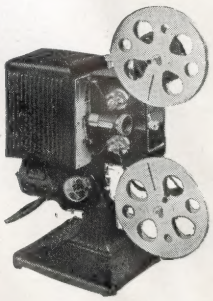

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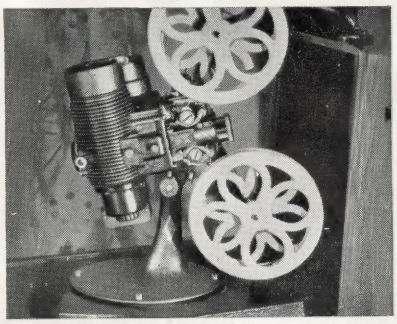

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Going to it . . .

A tribute to G.B.'s performance

in every theatre of War

Royal Air Force Station.

11th July 1940

The Manager,
G. B. Equipments Ltd.,(16mm Dept.)
Woodger Road, W.12.

Dear Sir,

At last the films "CUCKOO IN THE NEST" and the cartoon have turned up, and I am sending them to you immediately. It is rather remarkable that we have got them back. I left them on the quayside on June 16th, and their only packing was an old cardboard box with only my name on it. We had no opportunity of bringing them with us or of repacking them. They do not appear to have come to any harm.

Most wonderful of all is the fact that I have also received the projector and loudspeaker intact. Although neither piece had the slightest bit of covering or protection of any kind, and were slung into a ship's hold among baggage, crates, guns and ammunition, when I plugged in to the electric light socket in my office, the machine ran perfectly normally in every way, no lamps or valves having suffered. As the apparatus is now nearing three years of age, and during the past nine months has travelled with me over thirty thousand kilometres in France under difficult conditions, I think you will agree with me that both its manufacturers and its owner ought to feel proud of its performance.

I wish you could have been present on the night of June 13th, when we halted in a wood during our final retreat. Connecting up to a small ¼ h.p. motor, in the midst of pelting rain, under a canvas sheeting, and propping the projector up on the wreck of an old piano, we showed "CUCKOO IN THE NEST" to about 100 lads. It was an occasion not to be forgotten.

With kind regards,

Sincerely yours

J.R. Appleyard

(Chaplain R.A.F.)

ON THE OUTBREAK OF WAR we made our preparations to "go to it" in meeting a great national need—the large-scale entertainment of our Fighting Forces, Home Defence, and Civil Population. At the end of several months our new public now includes R.A.F. Units, Militia Camps, Hospitals, Local Education Authorities, Industrial Undertakings, and Home Defence Units — here are ready-made audiences *whose need for recreation is vital.* Dealers all over the country are producing great results from these contacts in their locality. Above is an extract from one of many hundreds of letters recently received, letters all of them which should spur us on to greater efforts since they indicate more than mere praise for the performance of our equipment, in testifying rather to the proud and enduring work of which this industry is capable.

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Bell & Howell Filmosound 120, 500w. lamp, complete with speaker, transformer, cable, etc. **£140 0 0**
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Selmer Amplifier, 10w. output, twin speakers, microphone, good condition **£12 0 0**
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8 mm. CAMERAS & PROJECTORS

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9.5 mm. CAMERAS & PROJECTORS

Dekko with f/1.9 Dallmeyer lens ... **£7 12 6**
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Dekko de Luxe with f/1.9 Dallmeyer lens **£11 17 6**
Dekko de Luxe with f/1.9 TT & H Lumax lens **£12 17 6**
Pathe H, f/1.9 Berthiot, variable speeds... **£9 17 6**
Pathe Lux, f/2.5 lens and Telephoto ... **£9 17 6**
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Pathe Home with motor, super attachment and resistance **£5 17 6**

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16 mm. CAMERAS & PROJECTORS

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Siemens B, Cassette loading, 3 speeds, f/2.8 Glaukar lens, leather case **£20 0 0**
Siemens D, three-lens sliding head, Xenon lens **£55 0 0**
Cine Kodak BB, f/1.9 lens, case **£13 10 0**
Kodascope EE, 300 watt lamp, Transformer, case **£21 0 0**
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Kodascope C, 100w. lamp, resistance, bronze **£8 17 6**
Kodascope "A," 250w. lamp, resistance **£13 10 0**
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SAVE WHILE YOU SPEND!

All you have to do to obtain free Savings Certificates is to purchase your camera or projector from us or, if you already have these major items, you may want some accessories. Perhaps a screen, tripod or exposure meter. Whatever you buy, providing it is a used item, comes under this scheme. The scheme operates on all purchases from the date this advertisement appears, August 16th, 1940.

TECHNICAL ADVICE BUREAU

We are still running our free Technical Advice Bureau. This Department was started to help you and can still do so. Any question you want to ask about cinematography is welcome and you simply mark your enquiry "Technical Advice Bureau."

PROJECTOR REPAIRS

Your projector may have had exceptionally hard wear last season. If so, send it to us before the new season commences for a complete overhaul. Our charges are very reasonable.

FILM EDITING

We undertake editing and splicing of films at moderate fees. You can edit the film yourself and send it to us for the joins to be made. Quotations upon request.

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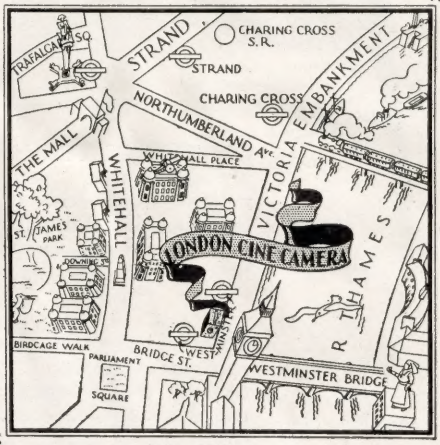
Bolex Folding Projector stand **£5 17 6**

WE'RE EASY TO FIND

St. Stephen's House is on the Embankment, just by Westminster Underground Station—only two minutes from Charing Cross. Many Trams, Buses and Green Line Coaches stop outside our door. If you are not familiar with London consult the map on the right.



LONDON CINE CAMERA Co. LTD.

"ST. STEPHEN'S HOUSE" *(By Big Ben)*

VICTORIA EMBANKMENT, LONDON, S.W.1

ABBEY 1611

AMATEUR CINE WORLD

Vol. VII September, 1940 No. 6

(Published August 16th)

Gordon S. Malthouse
Editor

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M.C.C. GIVES A LEAD

YOU know those little Swiss barometer houses with two doors, out of which a man comes when it is going to rain, while his spouse remains discreetly inside, only venturing forth when the weather gives better promise ? If we were to make such a house to forecast, not the weather, but the progress of movie-making, with the man to represent projection and the lady to embody in her dumpy person, filming, then the good lady would seldom come out for a breath of fresh air.

Of course, there are very good reasons why she cannot get out as much as formerly. One of them is that she hasn't as much leisure. But it really is time she gave her husband a rest. Perhaps her conscience troubles her and she feels that she would be better employed in finding some chores to do about the house ; but if she stays indoors too long without respite, her work will suffer. When leisure is restricted, it is the more essential to use it fully, so that the maximum relaxation is obtained.

Come out of doors ! Get the camera working ! A few odd hours spent in filming will repay you a hundredfold in the darker evenings when you set about the fascinating job of assembling your shots and making a film out of them. You cannot spend as much as formerly on film stock ? But this is not so much of a drawback, after all. You will have to husband that stock very carefully, plan each shot, cut down wastage. If you have been prodigal of it before, then your films cannot have been good. And there is another way out. Join in communal filming. Support your local society all you can. Make the effort.

More Than A Hobby

If you still have any misgivings, consider this : even in these times the educational authorities in this country are taking more and more interest in substandard cinematography. *They* realise its value and glimpse its future. They realise that it is something more than a hobby. Towards the end of last year the Middlesex County Council started a series of classes for the study and practice of movie-making. They are held at the Harrow Technical School.

We went along to one of them. A camera crew was working on a film showing the production of pottery. Other students were engaged in the processing darkrooms and at the editing and titling benches. We lingered awhile to watch the filming. Each student had his allotted task. One directed operations, others were responsible for the lights, the camera, continuity and stills. And over all was the kindly, attentive eye of Mr. Stanley Schofield, F.R.P.S., the principal of the school.

His is the right method. He lets his students work things out for themselves—or appears to do so ; but the looker-on soon realises that it is his unobtrusive questionings, advice and example that knit the crew together. " If we move this light over to *here* we shall get better modelling " . . . short dissertation on interpreting the meter reading . . . a question mildly put, with a twinkle in the eye : " I don't think you've wound up the camera ? "

The filming was carried on in a fine lofty studio, 40ft. by 40ft. There is a projection theatre, laboratory and several darkrooms. Titles for the film were already being made in a spacious classroom. In one of the students engaged on this work we were delighted to recognise a 1939 " Ten Best " winner.

And the equipment ! Six cine cameras, including two Kodak Specials, projectors and accessories of the finest quality. Good equipment is not, of course, a guarantee of a good film, but when its use is allied to such thorough-going instruction as is given at this school, then worthwhile results can be confidently expected. And they are realised in the students' first film, which has just been sent us for criticism. The stock used was Kodachrome A and in no case were the sets illuminated with more than six standard Photofloods. The lighting is particularly good, excellent modelling (through the use of back and side lighting) having been obtained. Shooting was limited to one and a half to two hours a week, and the film was completed in ten weeks. Rather less than half the total footage shot was used.

Ambitious Plans

The syllabus of the recently concluded term provided for lessons of about 2½ hours' duration a week, an hour of this time being usually devoted to theory and the rest to practical work. More ambitious plans are being worked out for the new session which begins in September. It is hoped to publish details of them in an early issue. Meanwhile you can get further information yourself by writing to the Principal, the Harrow Technical School.

An organisation of this kind is to be wholly recommended, particularly in these times. Membership of a school or a society enables you to have the use of apparatus and stock that you could never acquire for exclusive personal filming, rarely takes up more than one evening a week of your time, gives you the companionship of people with kindred interests, furthers your knowledge and enhances your skill. And if circumstances do not permit you to join organisations of this type, why not pool resources with one or two friends ? You share the presentation of your films with others ; why not share the making of them ? THE EDITOR.

Why Red Cross Appeal takes Precedence

The Red Cross brought order out of chaos on the battlefield. It established that the wounded were to be respected and cared for, that military hospitals were not to be fired on, that nurses and doctors were to be protected and the lives of prisoners spared. The Red Cross arranges for the exchange of prisoners, traces missing men, repatriates the badly wounded, visits and reports on internment camps and arranges communication between prisoners and relatives.

Already the Red Cross has spent £300,000 on its great work of mercy. During and as a result of the last War it spent over £21,000,000. Encourage everybody to support The Lord Mayor's Fund, and send donations to The Mansion House, London, E.C.4., or to the Prisoners of War Fund, St. James's Palace, London, S.W.1.

I Avoid Mid-day Shooting

Says H. A. V. BULLEID

★ *Generally speaking, conditions are more favourable for filming early and late in the day, rather than at noon, a crisper image being obtained at those times.*

WITH modern panchromatic emulsions there is more than ever to be said in favour of shooting scenes early and late in the day, as opposed to the noon period. An extraordinarily crisp and sparkling image results ; and if a set-up is chosen that enables the scene to be shot with the sun at one side of and even slightly *behind* the subject, an extreme degree of "stereoscopy" is achieved.

One has to be rather careful about exposures ; with the sun behind the camera, ordinary day-time exposure is ample up to half-an-hour before sunset with panchromatic film, though with ortho one has to open up slightly—half to one stop ; this because the sun's rays are becoming redder. With the sun to one side, open up half a stop. With the sun behind the subject, give a full stop increase in exposure.

If a reflector is in use, no increase is needed ; but for bold, contrasty shots, I prefer to shoot without a reflector and deliberately sacrifice detail in the shadows—taking care that no important aspect of the subject is lost to the camera by being in shadow. The exposure meter will bear out the above-stated exposure factors ; care must be taken to interpret correctly the readings given against the light, of course, as any direct light striking the meter will cause too small a stop to be indicated.

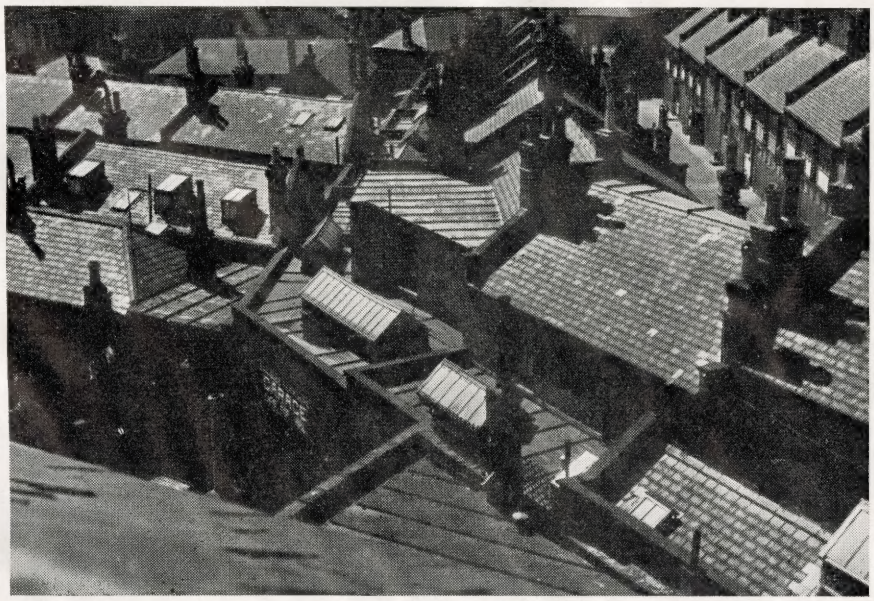
More than ever is a deep lens-hood essential when shooting against the low, slanting rays of the evening sun : it is easy to determine whether the hood is adequate by looking to see how far in the sunlight penetrates ; the top part of the hood throws a distinct shadow on the lower part, and this shadow *must* completely cover all the glass of the lens. It is too risky to assume that one is safe just because the sun cannot be seen in the viewfinder; many cameras have "cheated" viewfinders such that a little more is photographed at the top of the frame than is seen ; and in such cases the sun would strike the lens and spoil the shot.

Furthermore, when a wide-angle lens is in use, an additional margin of safety should be allowed by keeping the light *well away* from the lens glass, because these lenses are rather liable to flare, the resulting picture being distinguished by a pale circular area in the centre. If no lens-hood of adequate depth is available, other means—such as holding up a piece of cardboard, or getting someone to stand in a suitable position—should be found to cast a shadow over the lens.

Finally, while we are on the subject of outdoor filming, it might be mentioned that, although there is no restriction on the carrying around and using of movie cameras except in protected areas and near defence works, etc., the fact remains that the Great General Public *does* eye one askance if one floats around shooting street scenes, particularly, I have observed, if one has a turret-head camera with one or more telephoto lenses thereon.

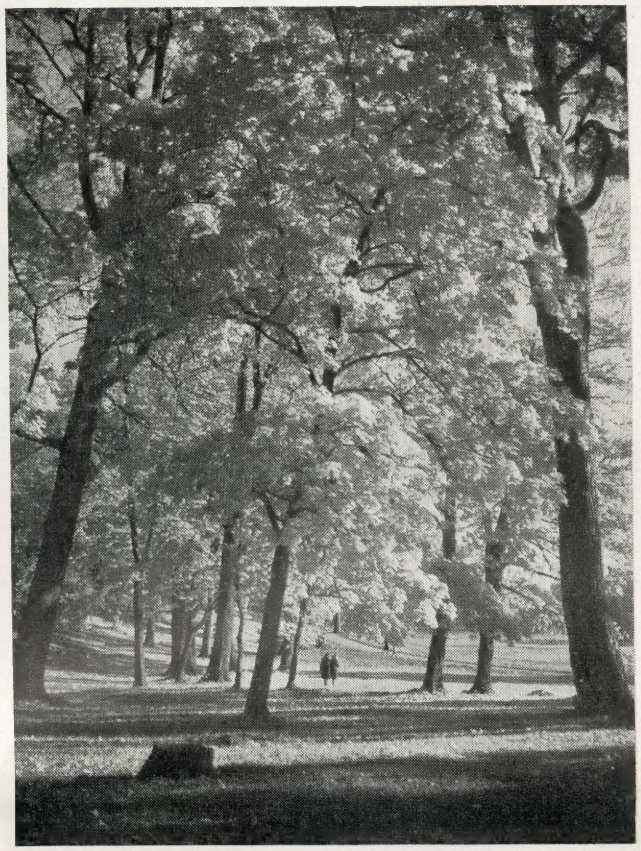
It therefore pays to acquaint the local police with one's shooting schedule well beforehand ; and, in addition, to see the nearest police officer just before starting to shoot and inform him of what one proposes to do. This saves irritating production delays. The police are most obliging if properly approached, and I can vouch that their good humour will stand up to the several alarms they will almost inevitably receive from well-intentioned passers-by who see one's innocent shooting.

I think it worth mentioning that a friend of mine circumvents interruption by carrying around with him, in a conspicuous way, a tripod. He says that people must take him to be a news reel man, since his impedimenta appear to be the badge of the tribe, and there are no raised eyebrows when he gets to work. Another good reason for using a tripod! His shots are better than ever they were before and he is now quite enthusiastic about the merits of a steady camera support.



A shot of strong contrasts which help to give virility to the scene. Filmed at mid-day, the hard brilliance of the photographic quality would be lacking.

The inclusion of the figures in this attractive shot helps one to gauge height and distance. Without them, would the trees have appeared so tall?



Amateur Titling

is 17 Years Out-of-Date

HAS it ever occurred to you that the lettering of the average sub-title is usually far larger than is really necessary, and almost invariably sprawls over the major part of the picture area? There is a tendency to play for safety in title-making by having a stock set-up, so that every title is automatically centred and uniform in lettering style and size; the professionals themselves adopted this method, for simplicity and cheapness, round about 1923.

Yet we amateurs go on happily with an out-moded style, not pausing to reflect that it only serves to date the more completely a film technique which is already something of an anachronism. Sub-titles are one of the most noticeable features distinguishing the silent from the sound film. If you must have them, at least let us see to it that they are sprightly and modern in appearance. We can be sure that if silent films were still being made by professional producers to-day they would not be content to follow slavishly a form found useful seventeen years before. New ideas would have been evolved, new methods of presentation.

The ideal titler has a frame to mark the precise area photographed, and behind this a movable easel on which the lettering can be set and positioned as desired; thus, a continuity title might be designed with a suitable background and with the lettering in the bottom right hand corner, if followed by a shot wherein the focal point of interest started in the same corner, e.g., a shot of a car approaching along a road. All cameramen know that these road shots can usually be filmed from any one of a number of angles, each of which puts the road in a different sector of the screen area: clearly, then, the title should lead the eye to where the car will appear in the following shot.

ROAD SHOWS *to troops or evacuees evoke gifts of improvisation to meet unexpected difficulties. Best of projector stands is two heavy tables, the smaller set on the larger, leaving a platform for the operator: wooden window wedges trim uneven legs. Electric points may be of all kinds; adaptors consist of various kinds of plugs each connected by short wires to a socket fitting the projector lead. An extra length of 40/36 twin flex or 16/30 cab-tyre cord obviates putting the projector in an awkward corner. Take opera glasses to watch the focussing, and a loop title ("Please take your seats") for the first set-up.*

Similarly, with dialogue titles, I have successfully placed the block of wording off-centre to a position corresponding to the frame position of the speaker: for instance, one shows a C.S. of the overbearing villain speaking, with his head at the top of the frame; the timid "little man" replies, and his head is low down in the frame; by arranging titles to suit, an extra point is gained in the phases of dramatic continuity and emotional effect.

With regard to dialogue titles, it is by no means essential to show a C.S. of the speaker before the title—nor even a M.S. Sometimes considerable effect can be gained by cutting in the spoken title when the adjacent shots show only the speaker's feet, or even an inanimate object. This is best illustrated by means of examples . . . Thus, two young people have a fierce quarrel, and we fade-out on them separating haughtily; then fade-in on C.S. of a tennis racket. Cut to Title: "Let's have a game, Joan . . ." Cut to C.S. of hand picking up racket. Cut to C.S.: Joan nods, smiles.

These four shots will be found to make a very satisfactory sequence: the unusual use of the title without showing the speaker has the advantage of saving a fairly difficult acted close-up and economising on footage into the bargain. In this example it was, of course, obvious to the audience (from their previous knowledge) who the speaker must be: here is a case of the same effect used in an introduction scene where the characters had not previously been seen . . .

1. (pan) M.S. Girl's feet walk along; handkerchief drops . .
2. M.S. Man's feet enter picture, hand picks up handkerchief . . .
3. M.S. Girl's feet stop: man's feet enter picture.
4. TITLE. "Hey, sister, your hankie hit the highway."
5. M.S. He hands it over. She smiles. Then,
6. (pan) M.S. their feet walk on together . . .

G. N. ILLINGSWORTH

Shot No.	Artistes	Props.	Setting	Lighting
208 CU	Maid's hand	Charm	Ext., street	Day
223 CU	Dead cart attendant		,, ,,	,,
229 CU		Bill, "Fortune Teller"	,, ,,	Dusk
303 CU	Manservant's hand	Packets of pills, bottles of medicine, etc.	Int., shop	Night
317 CU	Merchant's hand	Large Bible open91stPsalm	Int., parlour	,,
320 CU		Sign "John Bates, Mercer"	Ext., shop	Dawn
324 CU	Plague victim's hand	Scars on hand	,, street	,,
327 CU	Shadows of Maid and Manservant	Bill as script	,, ,,	,,
328 CU	,, ,,	2nd bill as script	,, ,,	,,
329 MS	Watchman	Pig (Practical !)	,, ,,	,,
330 MS	Raker	Horn of period	,, ,,	,,
331 CU		Cart wheels	,, ,,	,,
332 CU		Print of 17th century coach		
415 CU	Maid's hand	Charm	Country road	Day
418 CU	Merchant's hands	Health permits	Int., shop	,,
423 CU	Son's feet	Cobbled street, period shoes	Ext., street	,,
425 CU		Swinging sign, "Thomas Winter"	,, ,,	,,
431 CU	Son's hand	Crumpled note	,, ,,	,,

The BREAKDOWN SCRIPT

In last month's article, "Amateurs Re-create the Past," which dealt with the elaborate planning necessary before commencing work on a rather ambitious photoplay, "The Great Plague," reference was made to a "Breakdown Script." In view of its great value as a supplement to the more familiar type of shooting script, some details of the preparation of a breakdown script are given for the guidance of other amateurs who will undoubtedly find it equally useful.

By HUGH BADDELEY
and
L. F. MINTER

IN planning their latest production, "The Great Plague," members of the Planet Amateur Film society realised that a great number of special notes would be necessary to show exactly when, and how often, each of the large variety of costumes and special properties would be required, both for studio and exterior sequences. Accordingly the idea of a breakdown script, always used by professionals, was borrowed. This consists of an elaborate summary, first, of all the shots to be taken on each scene, and, secondly, of all titles and other inserts under their respective headings.

A separate sheet is used for each scene, so that sequences appearing in different parts of the film can be grouped together. Thus if, for example, the film opens and closes on the same set, these two sections will appear adjacently on the breakdown sheet. It may be necessary to show a lapse of time involving a change of properties or lighting, and such details must be recorded.

Function of the Script

The layout consists for most purposes, of five columns, the first of which merely shows the shot numbers which refer to the general script. The next column lists the characters actually seen in the shots, the third enumerates the special properties which are also needed, and the last indicates the time of day to be suggested by lighting. Details of the action are not included as the shot numbers refer to the general script, the breakdown merely acting as a check that no shots are missed.

In addition, any special effects required or the construction essentials of sets are also added. In this direction the professionals use some particularly concise terms which are worthy of note. For instance, should a property need to be usable and not merely a dummy, the word "practical" is used, so that there frequently appear the expressions, "practical door," "practical window," etc., meaning that the action demands that they open and shut. Similarly, a set is described as "revamped" where it is to be used again with rearranged dressings.

These five columns listed above do not, of course, represent a hard and fast rule, but are merely given as an example of those which are found to cover adequately the requirements for "The Great Plague." The script should be broken down into as many sections as will most assist the producers. Thus, besides dividing it into separate scenes, a person preparing the breakdown sheets should differentiate between town and country exteriors, at the same time noting suitable districts for location work. Special sheets are prepared for captions and other minor shots such as close-up inserts of signs, letters, notices, etc. Shots of models, too, are collated so that they can all be photographed at one time.

A Useful Check

In effect, a well-prepared breakdown script should summarise the work of each department, enabling the director to judge how much work is involved in any branch of production. In this way, the cameraman's lighting worries are clarified by the grouping of every shot into its section, the art director knows the needs of each set and has a list of all necessary properties at his finger tips, the continuity girl can make immediate reference to costume and other matters for which she is responsible, the preparation of the captions can be proceeded with immediately the artist receives his sheet indicating which titles are superimposed and which are to be on any other special backgrounds, and in fact, every member of the production team has his or her task conveniently tabulated.

The following page from the full script (not to be confused, of course, with the breakdown script, which is compiled from it) is given in order that some idea may be obtained of its detailed nature and the necessity that arises for a breakdown script for shooting.

118. CU. He is writing in Old English style.

MIX TO

The letter nearly finished, in modern style, reading :—

To Mr. Robert Faulkner,

"Having decided to leave London with my family, can you help me to procure the necessary Health Permits as soon as possible."

119. CU. He finishes the letter and blots it with sand.
120. CU. Showing this blotting operation.
121. MS. He closes it and calls to a maidservant.
122. MS. The maidservant appears through doorway and crosses to his desk. (*PAN*). He gives her the letter and speaks :—
123. T. (Superimposed on above) "Take this to Robert Faulkner—he will see that it gets to the Guildhall."
124. MS. She nods assent and crosses to where a bowl stands on the table and takes up a piece of cloth. (*PAN WITH THE MAIDSERVANT*).
125. CU. She dips it into the bowl which contains vinegar.
126. MS. Pressing the cloth to her mouth, she crosses to the door and leaves the shop. (*PAN*).
127. MS. Maid walking with vinegar pad pressed to her face—glancing fearfully from side to side. (*FOREGROUND MODELS SUGGEST HOUSES EITHER SIDE OF HER*).
128. CU. Door marked with Plague sign. (*PAN ACROSS TO SUGGEST MOVEMENT*).
129. CU. Maid as previous.
130. T. "Those who fled left their goods to the mercy of those that remained."
131. CU. Doorway. A man is furtively creeping out—his arms laden with clothing.
132. CU. Another door marked with the Plague sign.
133. ? Introduce notice or title telling how the infected houses were shut up for a month and no one allowed in or out.
134. MS. Door marked, and watchman outside.
135. CU. Maid pauses to rest, leaning on a post on which is a notice :—
136. CU. The notice : "Incomparable drink against the Plague never found out before. An ancient gentlewoman having practised in the last Plague anno 1636 offers advice. To be spoke with."

Choosing SOUND FILM Programmes

The previous article in this series (published in our July issue) dealt with technical aspects of the public film show. Here we are concerned with the technical quality of the films available.

The angle of view of this close shot is particularly apt; emphasis is concentrated on the most important features, the hands, while the player himself receives due prominence.

HITHERTO we have confined our consideration to the mechanical aspects of sound-film exhibitions, such things as acoustics, the suppression of unwanted sound, the placing of speaker and audience and so on. Let us now give some thought to the films themselves, and the ways in which sound both expands and limits our choice of subject.

There are two types of films, those which can be purchased outright and those which are available for hire. While much of this material is excellent there is some which is quite frankly bad, the makers having apparently considered that the presence of sound is a sufficient excuse to justify bad quality in both sound and picture. 'Soot and whitewash' visual quality is accompanied by clipped tonal values, in which the characteristics of the various timbres are merged into a metallic or wooden-sounding 'blurge' which is far from satisfying to anyone with any pretensions at discrimination. One can only counsel a certain discretion in choosing films.

It is not reasonable, however, to expect the same high standards of quality in substandard sound as is obtained in the best professional films. It is not a question of lack of care on the part of those who produce substandard sound-films, but is due to a fundamental fact.

Vibrations and Pitch

As is fairly well-known, the general pitch of a sound or note depends on the frequency of its vibrations—the shorter the wavelength the more rapid the vibrations, and the higher the pitch. But sound is much more complex than this.

The characteristic sound of a wood-wind instrument varies considerably from a brass or string instrument playing the same note. The differences, and the characteristics of sounds in speech and in music depend upon the proportion and quality of the 'overtones,' or sympathetic vibrations which coincide with the main note. If a given note is played the sound emitted is not only of that note, but of certain octaves and other known intervals above and below. The important tones in establishing the characteristics of the sound are those above the main note.

The sound-head of a projector is comparable in some degree with the photo-electric type of exposure meter. Varying quantities of light induce the passage of similarly varying amounts of electric current in a photo-electric cell. In an exposure meter this causes the galvanometer to move a greater or less distance across a scale. In a sound projector the tiny electrical impulses are amplified through thermionic valves until they possess sufficient power to operate a loud speaker so that every time there is a pulsation of current in the cell there is a corresponding pulsation in the speaker diaphragm, and if the frequency is sufficiently high a note is heard.

Pure vibrations of a simple character, such as have been obtained by mechanical drawing which was afterwards photographed on to a sound-track, give a tone that is entirely devoid of the character which is associated with any note produced by ordinary means.

The sound records of 'natural' vibrations are much more complex in form. This complex character of sound is demonstrated in the organs which have been installed in some of the smaller cinemas, in which the sounds are entirely produced by means of radio oscillation. By accentuating or suppressing certain of the overtones it is possible to use the same keyboard to simulate musical instruments of widely differing character.

The reader will realise, then, the complexity of a track which endeavours to reproduce the characteristics of *several* instruments playing at one time, and of the human voice in speech and song.

To produce the vibrations a light of known power, either proceeding directly from an exciter lamp or reflected from the main projection lamp, is allowed to shine on to a photo-electric cell. Between the

(Continued on next page)

Choosing Sound Film Programmes

lamp and cell is a gate or aperture, and the sound track is caused to proceed past this aperture at a steady speed. In passing the aperture the track controls or modulates the amount of light which is permitted to pass to the cell from moment to moment, and thus induces the required vibrations.

Two methods are used to secure this modulation, known respectively as the

(*Continued from previous page*)

sound gate, but the density varies from moment to moment, so that the track takes the form of a series of gray transverse lines. But the same rule applies in that the low tones are represented by broad, easily defined lines, while the high pitched ones are represented by narrow lines.

The value of a shot such as this lies not alone in its pictorial merit. The roller is so placed in the frame area that it becomes a symbol of farm activity; the background, being plain, serves to accentuate this—there is nothing to distract from the main feature of the shot.

Variable Area and Variable Density forms of track (familiarly abbreviated as V.A. and V.D.).

In the former case the track has two tones, black and white, the black being as opaque and the white as transparent as other photographic considerations permit. Here the variation in passage of light is secured by a variation in the *area* of the unobscured portion of the gate from moment to moment.

As will have been observed by the user, the gate aperture is in the form of a narrow slit, and to secure the varying suppression of a part of this opening, the V.A. type of track takes the form of a continuous range of hills and valleys, single, double or multiple in form. When the note is low and the frequency is also low, the hills are broad and the angles of their peaks are relatively obtuse, but for high-pitched tones these angles become acute and the images fine and delicate.

In the latter case (i.e., V.D.) there is some degree of density always present all over the

It is here that the size of the film affects the quality obtained. The extreme range of notes perceptible by the human ear is from as little as 30 vibrations per second, up to 15,000 for elderly people. Children can hear notes with 20,000 vibrations per second. To demonstrate our point we will consider a frequency of 1,000 vibrations per second.

35mm. film moves through the projector at 24 pictures per second, so does substandard sound film. We will here regard 16mm. film as representing substandard. 24 pictures on 35mm. represents a surface travel of 18 inches. On 16mm. it represents a surface travel of 7 1/5 inches. In the first case our 1,000 vibrations would be represented by lines or peaks approximately 1/60th of an inch wide, in the substandard the images would need to be less than 1/140th of an inch wide.

The ability of the film to record such detail is limited by the resolving power of the film, that is to say its ability to define clearly very small detail, and the image is further affected by loss in the reproducing or printing-down methods and processing concerned in preparing the film. The substandard sound-on-film record must therefore necessarily be to some extent inferior to that on the original standard picture.

We use the phrase 'original standard picture' because an overwhelming majority of substandard films are reproduced from 35mm. originals, but even if sound is directly recorded on substandard film, this question of resolution arises to limit the sound quality obtainable. As we mentioned in a previous article, the sound technician is evolving methods of improving the quality of sound obtained on substandard film by suppressing some characteristics and accentuating others, but the fundamental limitation remains.

It is for this reason that substandard films with a purely 'sound' appeal, as, for instance, a picture of a man playing a violin solo, are rarely truly satisfying.

Such considerations profoundly affect the task of choosing a suitable programme.

Making of Copies

Before passing on we should like to mention one further point in this connection. There have been very strong arguments as to the relative merits of V.A. and V.D. and of printing down or reproducing electrically in preparing substandard sound-track. Our experience is that at present the differences are so little marked as to provide the material for most energetic arguments on the part of the specialists. Those differences hardly concern the layman. What does concern him much more definitely, however, is whether the work of preparing and processing the substandard copy has been carried out carefully or otherwise. Casualness, particularly in processing, can more than eliminate the advantages claimed for any system, and the results are more apparent than would be the result from the same carelessness in preparing silent substandard film.

One of the largest of the 16mm. sound-on-film libraries in this country is that conducted by G.B. Equipments, Ltd., of Woodger Road, London, W.12. With its close contact with Gaumont-British Limited this company is able to supply an extremely wide range of up-to-date subjects. There are a series of excellent comedies, some of them being old subjects brought up-to-date with sound effects and comedy commentaries. Practically all the famous cartoon personalities are obtainable, Mickey Mouse, Popeye, Felix and others. There are travelogues, including some beautiful reels of 'The Face of Britain.' Under the heading 'Secrets of Life' many of the famous Secrets of Nature films are available, while many of their most outstanding News Reels have also been reproduced in substandard form.

Films Available

Readers of *Amateur Cine World* will need no introduction to the fascinating Cine Magazines edited by Mr. Andrew Buchanan, while a very large class of Instructional Films include things as up-to-date as special films for A.R.P. use. Travel, Industry and Science, Sport, Physical Education, Cookery, Horticulture and Religious subjects are also included in the list, and the hirer or purchaser can obtain expert advice.

The Pathescope Library offers a most comprehensive service to 9.5mm. sound-on-film users.

The serious and continuous user of

(*Continued on page 180*)

ACTING WITH PUPPETS

★ *This is the final article in the series on trick work with simple substandard apparatus. It is interesting to compare the effects described here with those illustrated in the article, "Physics of Lilliput," in this issue. In point of fact, the professional trick effects dealt with in that article are, though more spectacular, no more enterprising in conception than the ones illustrated below.*

By G. A. GAULD, B.Sc.

IT will be remembered that in last month's article we introduced our actors to Hollywood settings with the aid of our table-top studio. The effects were largely obtained by double exposure, first on the actors, followed by the superimposition of a model set.

It will be obvious, therefore, that if we introduce stop motion into the second exposure, we can combine living actors with puppets and animated models. A new and fascinating world of cine-photography opens up before us and the "Alice in Wonderland" type of film is brought within our reach.

An example of the animated model is given in the upper frame of Fig. 1. The whole set, depicting an imaginative interior of a clock, is a model, the opening through which the door is seen being cut out. This opening serves as a mask. The children are shown opening the door to come through and lean over the rail to watch the wheels go round.

The Second Exposure

The second exposure is made on the model with a black cloth behind the doorway, the first exposure being unaffected. Single picture exposures are made, the gear wheels being moved between each successive picture. In addition, a cardboard "pendulum" is arranged in front of the main source of illumination to cast a shadow over the set as it swings from side to side (one swing per sixteen frames).

A variation of the same type of effect is shown in the lower frame. The seated figure was first photographed against the black backcloth and then superimposed on the dark area of the model set suggesting the deck of a ship. The boat, railings and deck silhouette is cut out of cardboard and set up on Stage B.

The sea and sky background is painted on drawing paper, fixed to a cardboard frame and slipped into Stage C. With sufficient light, normal exposure may be given or single picture methods may be used. In either case, the background is moved slowly up and down to suggest the rolling of the ship. Do not overdo this as the scene is placid and you do not wish to convey the impression that a storm is raging.

Simulating Moonlight

In addition, a lamp was fixed up a foot or so behind the background on Stage C and a card, pierced with small holes, placed between the background and the lamp. This produced spots of light on the "water" and if properly manipulated, the flickering effect of moonlight on the sea can be suggested. A lot of trouble, perhaps, for a simple shot, but worth it if you want a shot to finish off your cruise film and the sea is a hundred miles away.

Ordinary dolls are not good subjects for animation, but amusing shots of the type shown in the upper frame of Fig. 2 can be made. This is a simple "split screen" shot, made by exposing first one half and then the other with a "positive" and "negative" high diffusion mask in Stage A. Complication is avoided by choosing a camera position to bring the top of the table to "eye level."

In the first exposure on the children, the position of the table top is marked on the glass screen in Stage B and the same marking used to adjust the camera position for the second exposure on the doll, which is, of course, much nearer. Detection of the "joint" is avoided by using a foreground model suggesting that the scene takes place on a verandah or is apparently to be seen through French windows, etc. A limited amount of "life" may be given to the doll by single picture exposure.

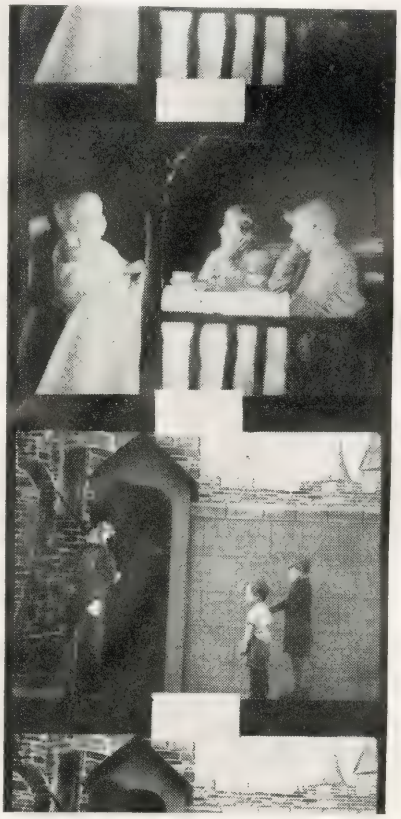


Fig. 2.

Without going to the extremes of cartoon work, really satisfactory animation is impossible, but quite effective results are obtainable by the use of cut-out figures with jointed limbs. An example of this method is shown in the lower frame of Fig. 2.

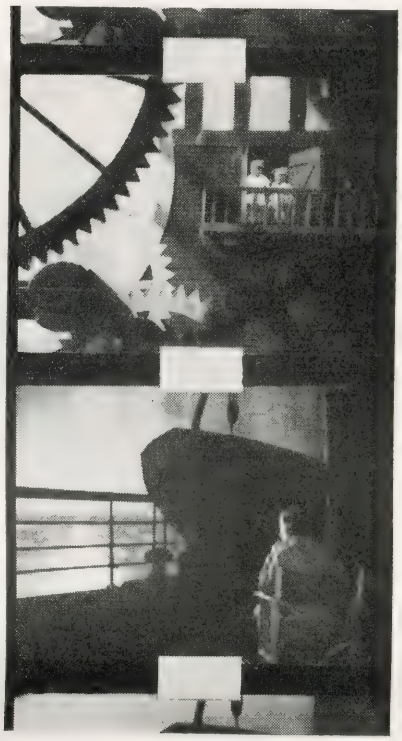


Fig. 1.

The sentry box, the walls beyond and the sky and turrets are models built up between Stages B and C. This leaves an opening to be occupied by a suitable set-up showing a normal stone wall. The children are photographed against this background, the Stage being covered with the black cloth, and the model set itself forming the mask.

For the second exposure, the black cloth is placed behind Stage C to black out the area first exposed. The "Stage" is set upright and the glass plate slipped into position in the holder in Stage B. The cardboard cut out figure of the soldier can then be manipulated on the glass plate and animated by single picture exposure. Care is required in the arrangement of the lighting to avoid unwanted reflections from the plate.

More Advanced Trickery

Turning to Fig. 3 (page 176), we see our trickery carried a stage further. The children coming out of the door of the doll's house wave good-bye to the doll sitting in the porch and run towards the camera out of the picture. The second doll then appears in the same doorway and joins in the farewells.

We use all the tricks we have learnt to accomplish this. The seated doll, the cottage roof and post and some of the background are models set up between Stages B and C, leaving an opening for the full-size background, which includes the door. A black cloth is hung inside the door to provide a dead background in the doorway. The glass plate is inserted in Stage B and the outline of the doorway carefully marked.

(*Continued on page* 176)

FROM SCENE TO SCREEN

Why is it that, although a scenic film seems, on the face of it, to be one of the easiest types to make, it so often falls short of the mark? Our contributor reveals one very significant reason: exposure presents unsuspected difficulties.

NOWHERE more than in the "scenic" film is it necessary to remember that the image on the screen is a translation, or impression, and not a reproduction, of the reality which confronted the camera. Wide reactions of a self-adjusting human eye have to be effectively converted into a scale of tones determined by projector conditions; in some cases already considered, the contrast-range of the original must be contracted to come within that scale, but in other cases, some of which are set out below, the cameraman may find it necessary to expand the apparent contrast-range to fill the projector-scale.

Colour-Contrast

In the previous article it was mentioned that colour-contrast was one of the three factors contributing to the eye's appreciation of the scene. The misty grey of distant smoke and the blue of the sky behind it, though easily distinguishable by colour in the original, are just the same to panchromatic film without a filter, so that in a long-shot smoke and sky melt into one another.

The excessive blue-sensitivity of the film plays an important part in regard to apparent contrast. The eye is most sensitive to the greens and yellows which form the middle of the visible spectrum, so that violets and blues on one side and reds on the other appear to be "dark" colours.

But ordinary panchromatic film is usually most sensitive to violets and blues, not quite so sensitive to greens and yellows and, like the eye, less sensitive to reds. Therefore, if the exposure is sufficient to make greens, yellows and reds come out in relatively correct monochrome tone values, the violets and blues are over-exposed and come out as light tones instead of dark.

The blue-sensitivity of the film is aided and abetted by a trick of the earth's atmosphere, which tends to neglect the reds and greens but reflects the blues—the azure of a summer sky is due to the fact that the particles in the upper strata of the air reflect down to earth the blues and violets of the sunshine but not oranges and reds. In consequence of this phenomenon the thin haze which lies between distant objects and the observer is predominantly blue.

A Trick of the Atmosphere

A landscape, seen close at hand, may have an intrinsic combined lighting-and-tone-contrast of 21 to 1. When the view is seen from a distance, intervening haze reflects to the eye an even "layer" of light superimposed over the whole scene. If this layer is no brighter than the darkest area in the scene itself, the apparent contrast becomes (21+1) to (1+1), or 11 to 1. The haze has reduced the contrast to barely more than half that of the original.

Fig. 1 (A). Although the air seemed quite clear, haze has degraded the contrast in all beyond the middle distance. (Pan film, no filter).

This flattening of contrast is realised by its absence on those rare evenings when the atmosphere is relatively clear and distant scenes acquire an unnatural brilliance of contrast and purity of hue.

To the eye the haze, being blue, is relatively dark, but to the film it is much brighter; actinically it is possibly three times as bright as the shadows in the scene. Consequently, to the camera the contrast becomes (21+3) to (1+3); a mere 6 to 1, or about half the visible contrast, which itself was approximately one-half of the intrinsic contrast.

If a weak yellow filter, transmitting only one-third of the incident blue light, is interposed before the lens, the contrast (to the film) becomes (21+3/3) to (1+3/3), or 22 to 2, the same as the visual contrast. A deeper filter will cut the blue still further and increase the contrast until, with an orange-red filter, the brilliance will approach that of the clear summer evening when haze is entirely absent. The contrast of the image as a whole may be still greater, since the sky, if deep blue, will take on an inky blackness fiercer than any shadow in the landscape proper.

This example shows that it is usually advisable to use at least a thin filter, such as the Ilford Alpha, to cancel the difference between the colour-sensitivities of the film and the eye. In this way, the screen contrast is no less than the visual contrast. When the visual contrast is itself low, it may be desirable to use a still stronger filter to give juiciness to the shot.

When the sun is rising or sinking there is less need for filters and, on occasions, it may be desirable to dispense with even a weak one. This is frequently attributed to the yellowing of the light but a greater factor may be the enhanced lighting contrast due to large shadow areas adjoining brightly-lit objects; at the same time the haze catches less light to degrade the low tones. The contrast therefore approaches the limit imposed by the projector.

Haze

Haze is not to be condemned as an unmitigated evil: it has a very real value in conveying the effect of distance. Just how the ordinary man is aware of the remoteness of objects is a matter on which experts are not quite agreed. Most people look at a scene with two eyes, and it is frequently assumed that the muscular effort required to converge the eyes is used as a measure of the distance of the object focussed. Yet there seems to be other factors, since the difference in convergence for objects more than a quarter of a mile away is so very small.

Undoubtedly "atmosphere" and "planes of distance" have much to do with achieving stereoscopic effect with a monocular camera. Haze is frequently so thin that it is not

Fig. 1 (B). A yellow filter was sufficient to restore the contrast in the distant view to its visual level in comparison with the foreground. (Pan film, 2X filter).

By
R. H. ALDER

consciously observed, but its effect is to create an apparent reduction in contrast in objects seen at a distance—the greater the distance, and consequent depth of haze, the more is the contrast flattened.

Although the haze is not seen, its effect on visibility is subconsciously translated into terms of distance by the mind. Therefore the cameraman who wishes to convey a feeling of depth must take care to select for a long-shot a filter which is only just sufficient to give adequate contrast in the nearest plane of the scene. Then each more distant plane will show an increased flattening of contrast, which will cause its normal reaction in the minds of the audience.

"And how," says the innocent beginner, "how can one tell what filter is 'just sufficient' to cut the nearby haze?" Frankly, experiment is the only reliable guide: deliberate experiment with two or three filters in succession on the same scene under the same conditions, for this is a matter of acquiring the "seeing eye" which consciously observes phenomena that formerly were taken for granted. But judgment can be helped by viewing the scene through a "PV" (Panchromatic Vision) filter in conjunction with a set of camera filters.

Introducing Contrast

Sometimes the nuances of haze are so gentle that a filter would kill them. Much can then be achieved by introducing a foreground object of steep contrast—either marked tone-contrast, such as a flamboyant hiking costume, or powerful lighting contrast, like a cross-lit white milestone or sheep-pen. The harsh contrast of the foreground, coupled with the soft gradation of the middle and far planes, brings stereoscopic relief.

The effect of distance is due not to the difference in tone between foreground and distant scene but to the distinction between the hard contrast inherent in the foreground by itself and the soft contrast in similar objects far away. A mere silhouette foreground is useful only to frame the picture, not to give it recession. To prevent the distant scene from being washed out, the exposure must be barely sufficient and therefore the foreground object must be not only contrasty but also bright to avoid silhouetting.

An interesting case arises when the camera is slowly tilted from base to summit of a mountain. Generally a shot of mountain-tops is heavily filtered, to make the snowy peaks stand out against a deep-tinted sky. Such filtering, however, neutralises the haze effect and seems to bring all the mountains close at hand. In any transition shot from valley to crag the filter used should be light, in order to preserve the sensation of travelling into the distance; the aperture is accordingly reduced to that of a long-shot to prevent the haze from causing over-exposure.

Fig. 2. Strong contrast in the foreground, moderate contrast in the middle distance and a flat rendering of the furthest scene have established three "planes of distance" in this shot.

When a wide-angle shot of the valley and mountains have to be followed by a telephoto of the peaks, it is necessary to avoid flatness. The latter shot must therefore have a filter slightly deeper than the former, but heavy filtering must be avoided because the sky must be reasonably matched in both.

Telephoto shots nearly always tend to flatness. This is due not only to haze but also to the narrow angle of the perspective lines leading to the "vanishing point." With such a lens a filter is essential, for even a "foreground" object is some distance from the camera. To counteract weak perspective an elevated camera stance, resulting in a horizon high up the frame (or even above it) is desirable. Exposure is as for a long-shot unless the lens has been used to secure a candid close-up, when the ordinary rules apply.

Fig. 3. An orange filter gives "bite" to a landscape even when the sun is almost behind the camera. It tends, however, to make skies unnaturally dark.

Avoid "Bittiness"

Perhaps it may now be divined why the scenic film is not popular. Only exceedingly great patience can be successful, for each shot must be carefully weighed. Eternal vigilance in technical matters is the price not only of freedom of action but also of achievement.

To avoid "bittiness" every aspect of the subject must be treated in sequence: a mere collection of long-shots is not a scenic. The artistic eye, roving over a delightful panorama, pauses here and there to appreciate the parts which go to make the beauty of the whole; even so are mid-shots and close-ups necessary to tell the whole story of the scene.

Every change from long-shot to mid-shot requires a fresh estimation of filter and exposure values. It involves more than this, however. Every change of filter must be "covered up," for nothing is more unpleasantly striking than a sudden switch-over from a heavily to a lightly filtered shot, especially if the sky figures in both.

These smooth transitions are artistic problems which the cameraman must work out for himself when he is conversant with the theme of his film: there is no royal road to success. But by bearing in mind the principles set out in these articles, that the business of the camera is to make the contrasts of the subject fit the projector, he will have a solid appreciation of the technical problems that assail him.

Through understanding the ways in which tone-contrast, lighting-contrast and colour-contrast can be utilised to counteract or augment each other, he will find that facility will rapidly come with organised practice.

Filter Economies

NOTABLE filter economies—which probably first appeared as "Hints and Tips" but are now fairly widely practised—consist of using gelatine filters supported in spring mounts made from the circular, flat clips which are built into Kodak projection reels; it is usually easy to acquire an odd used 50-ft. or 100-ft. empty reel, and every reel has two of these clips fitted between the core and the sides.

The clips have 4 short and 8 long, radial leaves: the long ones are all bent one way to form an open cylinder which must be a good push-fit over the lens front cell; and the short ones are bent the other way to secure (lightly) the gelatine filter, which should be cut to about five-eighths of an inch square, the corners of the square being gripped by the four bent-over leaves. These clips can be adjusted to grip any lens-mount between five-eighths of an inch and one inch diameter.

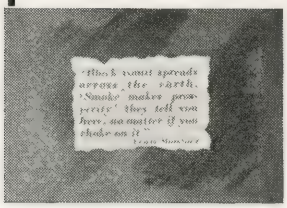
Easily-Made Lens-Hood

In addition, it is wise (and very simple) to make a lens-hood to clip over these filter-holders. This is done by forming a cardboard tube of outside diameter one inch, and length three-quarters of an inch, which again is gripped by the four short leaves, the long leaves being adjusted to fit over the identical clip carrying the filter.

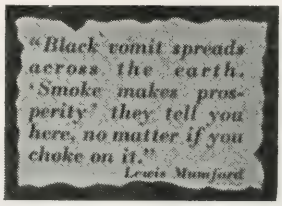
For storage purposes, pill boxes of precisely the correct dimensions can be had from most chemists. These at present cost, generally, one half-penny each, though some chemists might demand a penny for a small order of one box.

It must be emphasised that gelatine filters, carefully secured in the clips described above and kept stored, when not in use, in well-fitting boxes, will easily last a year of normal use. Care must, however, be taken not to touch them, nor to let any moisture get on to them.

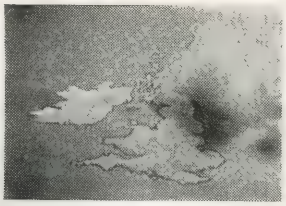
A Picture Lesson in Editing



(1). The film fades-in to a cutting of a quotation explaining the main title, which will follow later.



(1a). This cutting (the close-up above does not appear in the film) was from an illustrated review of the New York World's Fair documentary film, "The City," which appeared in the "Architectural Review." Fade-out.

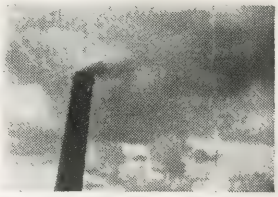


(2). Fade-in to a map of England. A cloud of smoke falls from above and when it disperses reveals—

(3). —the main title. Wooden block letters were used with a strong back-lighting. The credit titles follow, appearing similarly from clouds of smoke.

(4). When the final cloud lifts, this smoky city is revealed. This shot was from a still, appearing in a pamphlet published by the "Smoke Abatement Society."

(5). Chimneys taken from various angles follow in succession.



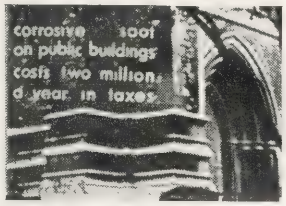
(6). The camera finally pans down from the smoky sky line to the street in which is playing—

(7). —a sooty baby.

(8). He stretches forth his sooty hand which introduces the "bad attributes of smoke" sequences. The hand was a still enlargement from one of the frames with white felt letters placed upon it.

(9). The first attribute appears on one of the fingers to introduce the "Ash" sequence. The remaining five are introduced in the same manner. (See 14).

(10). Typical domestic shots follow of grimy dishes, clothes being washed, dusting, etc.

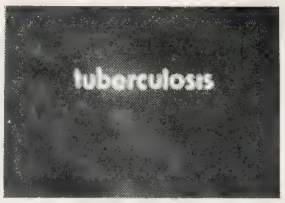


(11). Stills enlarged from single frames form backgrounds to titles which act as a kind of running commentary.

(12). Picturisation of the major disadvantages of smoke follows the minor ones, passing from domestic annoyance—through expense—to disease caused.

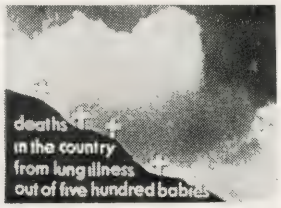
(13). This laboratory shot, and the previous one, show the effect of sulphuric acid in smoke upon building stone.

(14). The fifth time the hand introduces a sequence it appears as here—(see 9).



(15). The names of diseases concerned advance out of a pillar of smoke.

(16). The association of ideas in this shot is particularly apt.

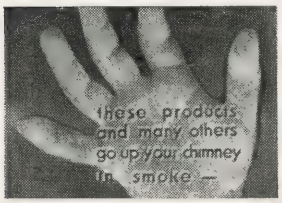


(17). This, and the following diagram, were made from a photographic background combined with a cut paper foreground. Dissolve to—

(18). Note that the same background is used as in 17, but in negative form. Compare 20 for a further use of negative images.

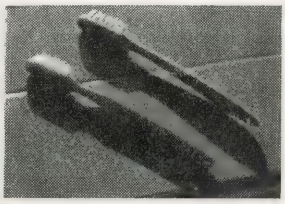
(19). A clean baby playing in the sunlight introduces the new series of sequences. Compare with 7.

SOME time ago we published a series of stills of the main shots of the film, "Land-fall," by D. Shaw Ashton, one of the 1938 "Ten Best." This feature proved so popular that we have asked Mr. Shaw to deal similarly with his 1939 "Ten Best" picture, "Black Vomit" (9.5mm.). These stills, which are produced by himself, provide a most valuable guide to the basic features of film production. Interesting details about each shot are given in the captions.



(20). He stretches forth his clean hand. This is the same black background with white letters as in the previous series. See 8. However, the film was developed to give a negative image.

(21). Compare with 9.

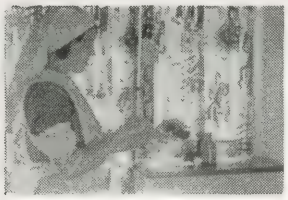


(22). A shot from a short sequence showing the use of plastic materials.

(23). A close-up from the "paint" sequence.

(24). Scents and soaps are displayed by a slow pan along a back-lit mirror-glass shelf.

(25). A bath-room scene follows.



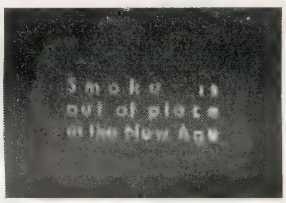
(26). In the medicines and drugs sequence there is an amusing incident with nasty medicine and—

(27). —the little boy. Shots are inter-cut with the medicine spoon getting closer, until the final grimace, after the medicine has gone.

(28). Compare with 14.

(29). The word, "Benzole," was accentuated with white paint.

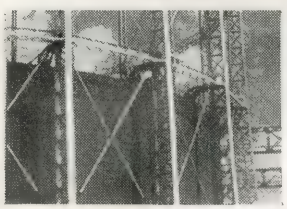
(30). Shots of traffic against modern buildings follow, leading up to—



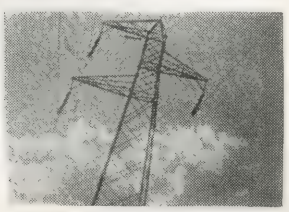
(31). —this title. Felt letters were used on a light felt background with a black mask shaped like a smoke cloud.

(32). The 'plane was a toy hung before a cloud background.

(33). Many shots illustrative of modern methods of smokeless heat and power follow.

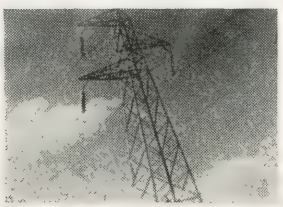


(34). An Ilford Micro 5 Orange filter was used here to provide dramatic contrast.



(35). For the pylon shots, a light yellow filter was employed.

(36). Shots are intercut to give an impression of clean modern power.



(37). See 35.

(38). Then follows a series of shots of clean, sunny, modern buildings, children playing, etc.

(39). The photography here is highly contrasty in order to give an impression of sunshine. After these sunny photographs, the film finally fades-out with a shot of clean white washing in the wind. The film ends with an injunction to write to the Smoke Abatement Society.

BY A "TEN BEST" PLAQUE WINNER

TROUBLES NEVER COME SINGLY

Here are Three

LOSS OF BOTTOM-LOOP

Although I am very careful in threading-up my projector, looking to both loops and to the proper engagement of the claw in the perforations, after a few minutes running, the bottom loop almost always disappears and the film is badly torn unless the projector is stopped immediately.

It seems that your take-up belt is far too tight, and this will (particularly at the beginning of a reel, due to the small size of the take-up centre) cause the film to be snatched away from the bottom-sprocket of your machine, thus decreasing the lower-loop. We suggest that you take off the take-up belt and stretch it carefully, so that it is not such a tight fit, and the take-up spindle is more free. With the machine at rest it should be possible to turn the take-up spool by hand against the tension of the belt, the latter *slipping* on the take-up spindle pulley. This *slip* must always be there in order to compensate for the varying size of the lower spool.

* * *

CLEANING DIRTY FILM

When I was projecting one of my long films the other evening, a splice broke and most of the reel ran straight on to the floor where it got very dirty. How can it be cleaned ?

If there is a lot of grit and dust between the turns of film, it is best to send it to one of the manufacturers' laboratories, telling them exactly what is wrong and asking them to re-wash it carefully and dry it again before cleaning it. On the other hand, you might try re-winding the film, and passing it through a clean fluffless linen handkerchief without applying any pressure. This should remove most of the grit, especially if it is done, say, twice or three times. After this the film can again be re-wound, but passing it through a folded wash-leather this time, dampened with pure carbon-tetrachloride.

* * *

MAKING TRANSLUCENT SCREEN

How can I make a translucent screen for back-projection to use in a school class-room ?

If it is to be portable, we suggest some form of non-inflammable material such as "Kodaloid," obtainable from Kodak Ltd. This material is a form of acetate film with a matted surface. On the other hand, if the screen is more or less permanent in character, it could be made from fairly stout 'ground-glass.' In either case, a wooden frame should be provided, finished with matt-black paint to give a clean edge to the picture area. It is also essential that the frame and screen itself should be hooded both behind and in front to prevent stray light spoiling the contrast on the screen. The hood should be painted black and may be made of light 3-ply or card.

With regard to the normal type of screen, a white matte surface is very suitable for square rooms ; but while its dispersive qualities are good, its reflective properties are low. The bead has a high peak reflection.

Amateur Comedy With War-Time Plot

If you have virtually given up filming for the time being, take heart by the example set by the amateur whose film is reviewed below. Although the theme is suggested by war conditions, there are no official restrictions whatever on the filming.

By THE EDITOR

IT is good to come across a film not only made in war-time, but inspired by a war-time theme. Another surprising thing is that the picture ("Call it a Day," 160ft., 8mm., by E. D. Power) is a comedy. Most of us who, probably rashly, have considered making a 'war' film, have visualised it as having a foundation of sandbags, with stirrup pump hose for framing. We thought it suitable and appropriate to film A.R.P. activities ; it was the type of work, we decided, that was expected of us.

It still is nice work—if you can get it. But how many lone workers who set out confidently to show the changing face of their little part of the world have gone on doggedly, undeterred by the half-wits who can smell a spy a mile off ? The authorities have definitely stated what we may not film and have left us an almost illimitable field through which to range. It is only some misguided members of the public who put up barriers in it.

These followers of the modern heresy hunt have been a persistent annoyance to photographers and cinematographers ; they have been a nuisance, too, to the police who have had to investigate their wild reports. Of course, one appreciates that they are actuated by a misguided sense of duty, but their first duty should be to preserve morale, not disrupt it.

Commonsense

The exercise of a little commonsense will dissolve all the chimeras, for what sort of musical comedy spy is it who openly takes a cine film of a church tower, a pond, a haystack ? Even if we assume the ridiculous : that knowledge of these things is in some incalculable way vital to the enemy, surely the 'spy' would find it safer to rely on memory ?

Anything that impedes the legitimate practice of a hobby in these times is to be particularly deplored. We are nearly all of us working harder and longer hours than before the war ; and the opportunity and means of relaxation are more than ever necessary if we are to perform our tasks with the maximum vigour. Fortunately there is now unmistakable evidence that sane counsels are prevailing and of less flourishing of authority by those ill qualified to exercise it.

The producer of " Call It a Day " wisely chose a setting unlikely to attract unwelcome attention : a farm. And apart from a shot of a respirator being put to an unlikely use, there is nothing in the film of a war-like nature, not even an A.R.P. badge or a ration card. Yet, without the situation created by the war, it could never have been taken. The story is briefly, that three weak-kneed young ne'er-do-wells take up farm work to escape military service, but find the work so arduous that they are glad to get into the army.

The plot is neatly contrived and offers considerable possibilities, but unfortunately they are inadequately realised because of the old trouble : lack of planning. The producers, we are told, did not follow the original script and the film was, in fact, shot off the cuff without one. Twice when they arrived at the farm it poured with rain, and shooting had to be abandoned. The third time the arrangements previously made with the farmer fell through because of unforeseen circumstances—"so we made the best of a bad job."

Impatient of Delay

After such irritating set-backs as these it is quite understandable that the producers should want to get on with the job, even though the facilities they had hoped for were not available. We should probably have done the same ourselves, though, viewing the situation now with calm detachment, we categorically affirm that they should not have attempted to shoot the entire film, straight off, without preparation.

To save their faces they could have bought some fish to take home with them : taken continuity shots of farm scenes, close-ups of this and that, general views. Indeed, so eager were they to take the action sequences, that they seem to have forgotten about these necessary continuity links.

The film opens with the three young men ambling along a lane and asking the way of a passer-by. But they haven't any luggage—only their respirators slung over their shoulders. Of course, their luggage *might* have been forwarded ; indeed, feckless young fellows that they are, they would probably not have wished to be burdened with it. Yet the fact remains that, minus baggage, the situation lacks conviction.

Had they been seen struggling with it, the keynote of the film would have been struck at the outset. Without luggage they might be just out for a walk ; with it, we know that not only are they going somewhere, but they are going somewhere to stay. Besides, there could have been a lot of welcome comedy incidents—shifting of luggage from one hand to the other, hoisting it, in desperation, on to shoulders and nearly overbalancing in the process, and so on. If you saw the Laurel and Hardy comedy, "A Chump

By Appointment

Amateur films of any size, subject and gauge may be sent for review. Those that reach a reasonable standard of merit are awarded a Leader. A special animated Leader is given for films that are particularly noteworthy. Please do not send us your film until we ask you to, but first advise us that you have a film you wish reviewed, stating its length and gauge. We will then reserve a date for screening it, and inform you accordingly. Please do not forget to enclose the cost of return postage with your film, Address : The Editor, " Amateur Cine World," 300/304, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1.

at Oxford," you will remember what a lot of really funny business there was in their carting luggage about.

"Call It a Day" was probably made before sign posts were removed and the peasantry was chary of directing strangers. Since we urge that much of the film should be reshot (for the theme warrants it) we suggest that play is made of the fact that they have difficulty in finding their way.

Indeed, a complete film could be made with this situation as the plot. A sets out to go from B to C and finally lands up at B without ever getting to C. It could be a pleasant, gentle little comedy, with your friends taking the part of suspicious local inhabitants, and there would be an excellent opportunity of securing a good bag of scenic shots.

Or the film could be made as a farce, with the final shots showing the seasons slipping by and the traveller, now rather like the Wandering Jew, a drooping figure on the skyline as another night closes in.

Ideas for Plots

Or the plot could be considerably more ambitious ; we could borrow an idea for it from "She Stoops to Conquer" in which, it will be remembered, a young blood is told that a private house is an inn, and throws his weight about in it, to the indignation of the owner. In a comedy in which the probabilities are not enquired into too closely, we need not look askance at a story which postulates mistaken identities through confusion brought about by the difficulty a stranger might experience in knowing precisely where he was.

To return to "Call It a Day." The young men get into the sort of scrapes one expects them to fall into : errors in procedure in playing the attendant to farm animals, usually resulting in their being pursued by their charges, attempts to snatch a rest from these trying chores and being prevented from doing so by the farmer, and throughout a marked distaste for their work. One of them puts on his gas-mask when he cleans out the pigsties.

The situations are quite well contrived, but unfortunately the treatment is wrong. It is far too slow ; timing in a comedy of this type needs to be very slick. One knows what is going to happen next ; one can see it coming only too plainly. The element of surprise is lacking. The action should be punched out, as it were, not allowed to drool along to its conclusion.

What Is the Climax?

Then again, vital action is frequently shown only in medium-to-long shot. It is too distant and remote. Had a script been prepared, the producers would have been able to supply at once an answer to a question they have failed to ask themselves : What is the climax, the funniest part, of each comic incident ? Knowing it, they would have been able to lead up to it neatly, without tiresome deviation. And having arrived at it, they would cut. A good deal can, however, be done to improve the film as it stands, by trimming many of the shots so that the pace is accelerated.

Consider, for example, this incident. A man goes into a shed to milk a cow and rushes out pursued by a bull. How should we deal with a sequence of this kind ? Should we show him going up to the shed, the camera remaining in the same position throughout, hold the shot while he disappears and wait for him to re-appear, followed immediately by the bull ? If we did so, the pace would be too slow and much of the effect would be lost. Further, we should be filming the entire action from one position only ; the treatment, therefore, would be too static.

It is an axiom of stage acting that a player should never have his back to the audience. This is a policy which might well be followed, in moderation and with adaptations, by the movie-maker. (One can for the moment forget that there are occasions when a shot of a person's back, hunched shoulders, forbidding contours, can be most eloquent on the screen). As our amateur cowhand disappears towards the shed, some of our interest disappears with him. We catch no glimpse of his expression, we have no inkling that anything is afoot, so that when the climax

In a situation such as this, almost any viewpoint could be chosen which gives prominence to the buildings. The photographer has, however, chosen a viewpoint in which the white mass of cloud balances the darker mass of hill and cottage, thus achieving a harmonious composition.

occurs we are, as like as not, unprepared for it and the greater part of its effectiveness is lost on us. Particularly is this so if the angle is not changed.

The element of surprise is, of course, one that we must strive for, but it must not catch the audience napping. But if there is no build-up to the climax, the effect of that climax is diminished. Let us therefore prepare the ground.

First we must create interest in the unsuspecting cowhand. He must not be just a person who goes into a shed and is ejected from it. So we begin with him walking away from the camera, but obliquely, and then cut to a close shot of him approaching it, the camera having taken the place of the shed. He can be dreamy, jaunty, what you will, but we must have a shot of his face.

Then could follow a close shot of the pail and stool he carries. Next a medium shot of him walking along. Then we station our camera at the door, to film him as he approaches ; and in the following shot the camera could be right in the doorway for a shot of him peering, blinking, into the somewhat murky interior. He walks right up to it, so that his bulk produces a virtual blackout.

Now we cut quickly to a shot of the door from the outside, fairly close up. He shoots out wildly, and we must see the alarmed expression on his face, the

(*Continued on page* 180)

Is Your Query Here?

Address your query to the Enquiry Bureau. No coupons are necessary, but please remember to enclose a stamped, addressed envelope.

SPEED RATINGS

Why do some manufacturers give two alternative speeds on their cartons of film, and why does my friend's exposure-meter give a different rating from mine and from the manufacturer's for the same make of film ?

Unfortunately, there is still no standardisation about film speed figures and exposure-meter calibrations. If your exposure-meter consistently gives you either under-exposed or over-exposed results, then we suggest that you alter the figure or rating for that particular film stock to meet your own particular case. The fact that your friend's exposure-meter is a different one and has a different rating is of no importance to you, provided that the figures which you use individually give you good results and consistent shots. If you are in any doubt, you should write to the maker of the film stock you use, telling him the type of meter you have, and ask for his advice. All the larger manufacturers have a special department for dealing with cine enquiries and are most willing to help.

* * *

CLOSE-UPS WITH FIXED-FOCUS CAMERA

I have a fixed-focus type camera, with an f/3.5 lens, and wish to take close-ups of model figures and toys in a simple puppet film. What is a "supplementary" lens and how do I use it in place of the camera lens ?

A supplementary lens is not used in place of the camera lens, but in addition to it. This close-up lens may be made from a cheap spectacle lens, such as can be bought at most chain-stores. Those supplied for 6d. each will be found to be marked with a number. This number can be taken as the working distance, i.e., a No. 12 lens can be used for photographing at a distance of 12 inches. The supplementary lens should be mounted in some form of tube that will slip over the lens mount of the camera and keep it as near as possible to the camera lens. A simple method of doing this is to use a short length of ordinary postal-tube of brown cardboard, the inside of which should be blacked very carefully with ordinary (non-waterproof) Indian Ink, so that the inside has a matt finish which will not reflect stray light into the camera lens.

Puzzle Corner

No. 2.

In "First Love" appeared a long shot of a ballroom full of dancing couples. After a short while of this, all the couples, except Deanna Durbin and her partner, slowly faded out, leaving these two dancing in an empty ballroom. How was it done ?

(Answer on page 180)

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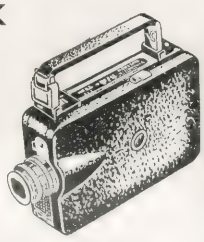
Magazine Cine Kodak



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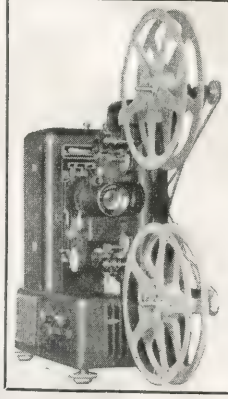

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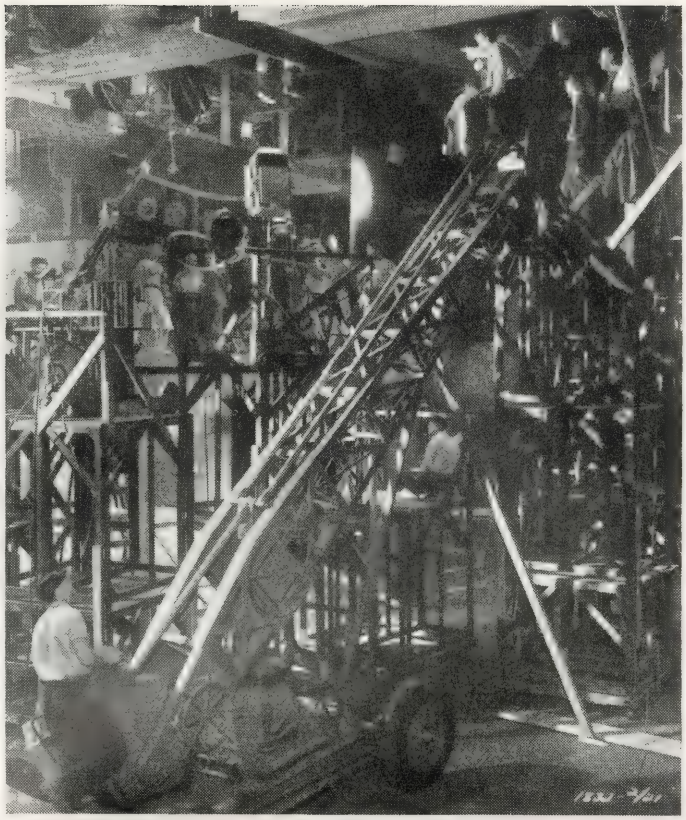


Part of a scene for "Dr. Cyclops" being filmed. Look closely at the top left hand side and you will see one of the characters in the grip of a giant papier-mache hand. This shot was used for the scene illustrated on next page. The camera is mounted on a crane to get the requisite height for shooting down on to the huge table on which the man is standing.

The Physics of Lilliput

There is always a fascination in discovering how trick effects are produced. Our contributor describes how the film, "Dr. Cyclops," was made and also discusses what actually would happen, physically, to a man reduced to a fifth of the normal size, and what happens in the picture.

By B. G. D. SALT

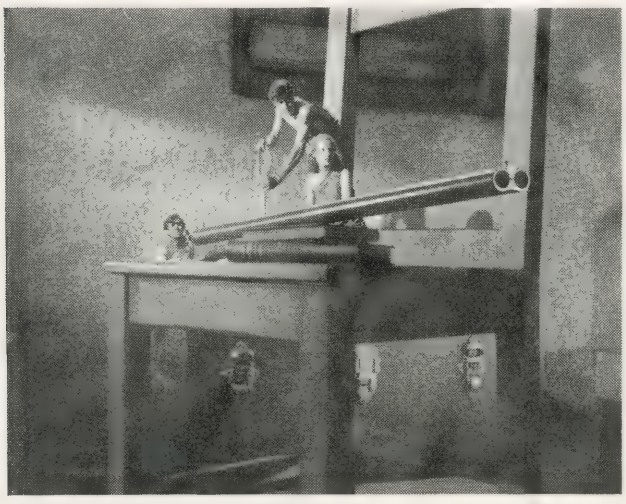
THE size of anything that appears on a cinema screen is purely relative. Unless there are reasons for thinking to the contrary, we assume, when we see a close-up of a head on the screen, that it measures some 8 or 9 inches across, although in actual fact it may measure 8 or 9 feet.

This is one of the cinema's conventions, just as the missing fourth wall is a stage convention. Consequently, it is possible to make any object appear any size by placing in the same picture some other object which acts as a scale or reference. If, from previous shots, we know the approximate size of this reference article, then we can calculate the size of everything else in the picture.

For example, if we have a shot of a man and a chair, and the man's head when he is standing up only reaches as high as the seat of the chair, then we can assume either that the chair is very big or the man is very small. If, however, we have seen in previous shots of the film another man, whose size we know to be normal, sit on that same chair, then we can now safely assume that in our example it is the man who is small, and the chair which is normal.

This convenient fact enables us to dwarf people by merely building big "props." The technique was developed very early in the history of the cinema. Melies made a trick film in which a man's head—apparently made of rubber, but yet living—swelled when air was pumped into it. It was done by merely superimposing on to a straight scene a track shot up to a man's head.

This discussion on relative size is appropriate because of the release in this country of Paramount's trick film, "Dr. Cyclops." This is one of those American pseudo-scientific dramas, with the emphasis very much on the pseudo, but nevertheless none the worse for that. The story concerns a scientist who, by the use of vast quantities of radium, succeeds in reducing the size of five people till they stand about 14 inches high. If we make the very big assumption that such a thing is possible, then it becomes of interest to examine just what would happen to a man so reduced in size, and compare our findings with those shown in the film.



When the midgets and Dr. Cyclops do not have to appear together in the same scene, no trick work is involved. It is enough to make the properties very large for scenes featuring the little people.

First of all, let us consider the static quantities involved. If our subject is reduced to about 1/5th his normal size, then areas will be reduced to 1/25th and volumes to 1/125th of normal. That means that the lineal dimensions of the big props. will be 5 times normal, areas will be 25 times normal, and volumes will be 125 times normal. The film makes one of the little men weigh about 1½lbs. Weight depends, among other things, on volume, and therefore we can see that the producers assume that the little men remained about the same density as before. Would this be so? It seems rather doubtful.

But it is when we come to the dynamic quantities that we find real discrepancies between what would actually happen and what is portrayed in the film. Let us take an example. Suppose a man jumps off a 16 foot wall. He will take just one second or 24 frames to reach the ground. Now suppose he is photographed among big furniture in such a way that both he and the wall appear ¼ size. The wall will now appear to be only 4 feet high.

Why Flies Escape!

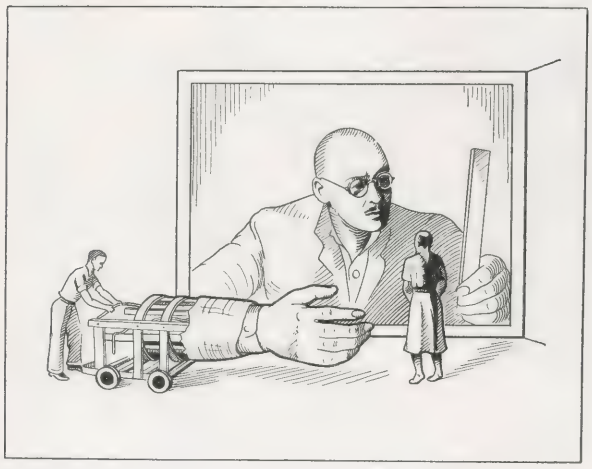
Now, since Galileo showed that the acceleration of all objects is the same when falling freely under gravity, our little man should take only ½ second to reach the ground. And, therefore, in order that the scene may be correctly portrayed, the camera should be turning at half speed. This is the reason why it is so difficult to swat a fly! . . .

But in "Dr. Cyclops" the little people have been photographed at the normal speed of 24 pictures per second. There is no vital technical reason why this should have been done; the probable reason is that it would be impossible to act anything but farce were the speed of all one's actions doubled.

(*Continued on next page*)

The Physics of Lilliput

(Continued from previous page)



Dr. Cyclops measures the midget. The photograph above was taken by our contributor during an actual performance of the film. The diagram shows how the scene was produced. Details are given in the article. The man being filmed in the grip of the papier-mache hand is seen in the production still on previous page.

(Remember that Chaplin's two-reel comedies were frequently shot at 12 frames per second in order to accentuate comic effects).

There are other discrepancies of a similar kind between "nature" and the film. For example, all the little people speak with normal voices. Apart from the volume of the voice, which one might expect to be considerably reduced, its pitch should be an octave or more higher, for the vocal chords of the midgets would be 1/5th their normal length. This is also technically quite possible, but dramatically unsatisfactory.

How It Was Done

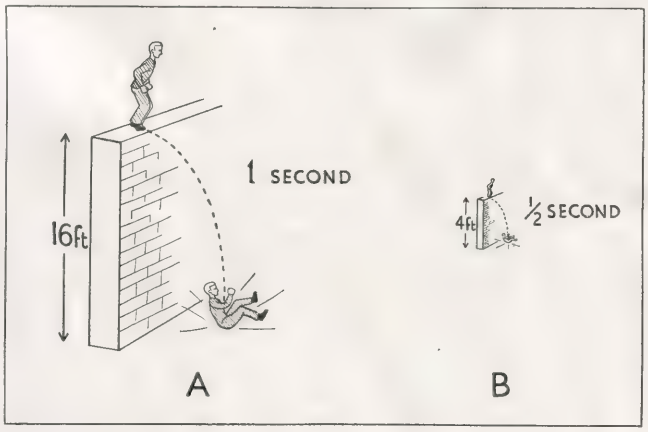
Again, assuming their muscles to be equally efficient when they are small as when they were large, they would be capable of jumping to approximately the same height —say some four feet or so. And yet we find them laboriously climbing up ten inch stairs. But perhaps it is ungrateful to point out any further divergencies, for, after all, the film was made only for entertainment, and in that it succeeds admirably.

Now let us turn to how the effects were actually produced. Clearly all scenes in which only little people appeared could be accomplished by the use of big props. These props. obviously had to be matched with great accuracy to an identical set, but of normal size, which would be used for scenes in which normal people appeared.

But in all scenes in which normal and little people appeared, some photographic trick had to be resorted to. There are several ways in which this sort of thing can be done. The simplest is an extension of the old idea of "glass" shots.

The cinema, being a one-eye process, is incapable of judging distance except by size. A big set a long way away looks just the same as a small set near to. Consequently, if we build a set in two parts, a small part near to the camera and a large part a long way away, it is possible, by careful matching, to make it all appear as one set. A man placed in the distant portion of such a set would then appear as a midget quite close to the camera.

The scene shown at the top of the opposite page could have been done in this manner, the crocodile quite close to the camera and the humans a long way away. The dividing line between the two parts of the set would be along the top of the rock. (Note : this particular still was almost certainly made by sticking a disproportionately large photograph of the crocodile on to a still of a large set. For the purpose of making publicity stills it is generally easier to fake the results by this means than to go to the trouble of doing trick photography of the kind used for the film shots).



Showing how the dynamic quantities of the film are inaccurate. A midget would take only half a second to reach the ground. In the film he takes a second, since the quicker action would probably appear farcical. This point is discussed in the article.

Other methods of combining big and little people in one shot are by amalgamating two scenes, filmed separately, on to one piece of negative. There are several methods of doing this. The commonest is by back-projection. In this method a translucent screen forms a backing, or is built into a part of a normal set. A previously taken shot is projected on to this screen from behind, while the combined scene is re-shot. Obviously the back-projected scene can be enlarged or reduced to any desired extent, according to the distance from which it was filmed, and the distance from which it is projected. Consequently the people in the back-projected scene can appear any size relative to the real people on the set.

Travelling Matte

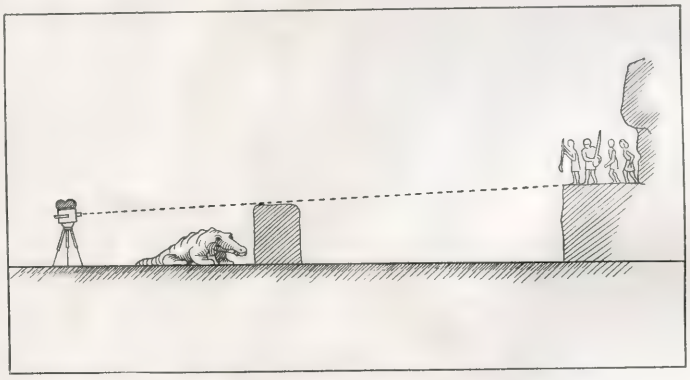
Another method of combining two scenes is by a process known as Dunning. This is an ingenious method making use of complementary colours. It is therefore not applicable to colour films. "Dr. Cyclops" is in Technicolor.

A third method is known as the 'travelling matte.' With modern optical printers this method is capable of producing extremely effective results. It consists of double printing on to the same piece of stock the two scenes which are to be combined, and areas are masked off during the first printing in order to receive the images from the second printing. The positions of these areas will obviously vary from frame to frame, so the masks are actually made by making extremely contrasty prints and dupe negatives from the negative to be used for the second printing. Such masks are called "mattes" : hence the name of the process. This method was used exclusively some years ago in a film, of a very similar nature to "Dr. Cyclops," called "The Devil Doll."

In "Dr. Cyclops" back-projection was used almost throughout. From a technician's point of view it was all fairly straight forward. The chief point of interest lay in the fact that the film was in colour and that some really enormous screens were used for the back-projection.

Colour photography requires a prodigious amount of light. Now, a large back-projection screen for black and white photography requires just about as much light as it is possible to get through one frame of film, so that for colour films it has been necessary to develop a triple-headed process projector. This really consists of three projectors, complete with three lamp-houses and three picture-heads. Three identical copies of the same film are projected simultaneously in register on to the same screen, thereby giving three times as much light.

Timing is of the utmost importance in trick photography and is very difficult to achieve. An extremely good example of it occurs in "Dr. Cyclops." One of the little people is on a table, and the huge form of Dr. Cyclops looms up beyond him. Dr. Cyclops is back - projected. With one hand he picks up a ruler with which to measure the midget. The latter backs away from the ruler.



At this moment Dr. Cyclops moves his other hand round out of the picture, and a moment later it is seen to come in behind the little man and catch him. The hand that moves out of picture is back-projected: the hand that comes into picture immediately afterwards is a huge papier-mache prop.! The timing of this difficult scene is perfect.

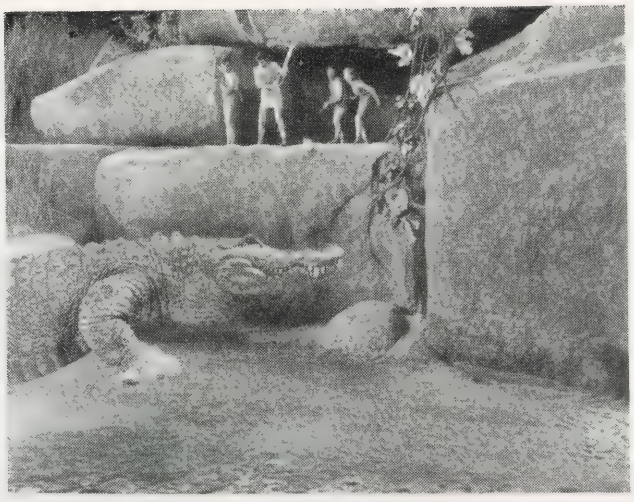
The huge prop. hand is itself of some interest. It is shown in the diagram. The fingers were made to move quite naturally. Obviously the hand was carefully jointed, and the fingers were moved by ropes or levers. This technique, while not new, is not very common. A superb example of the same thing occurs in Fritz Lang's "Siegfried," where a huge dragon was made to perform by this method. If you look carefully at the upper left hand side of the production still on page 173 you will see one of the characters being filmed in the clutch of the giant hand. This shot was used for the scene shown on the opposite page.

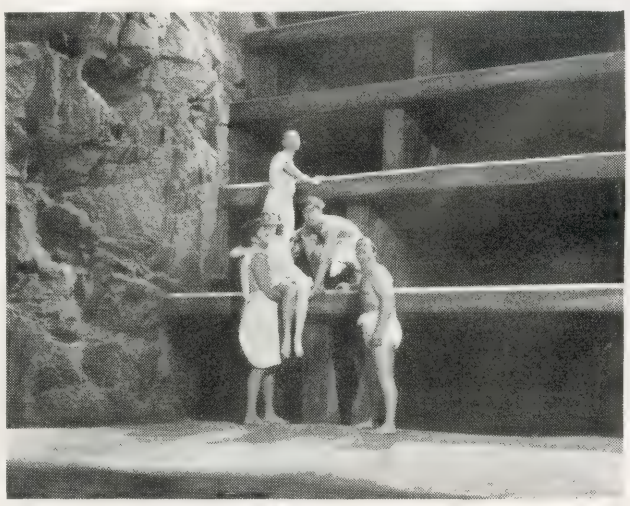
Quantity and Quality

The production still also shows a huge pair of calipers being used. The camera is mounted on a crane in order to get high enough to shoot down on to the huge table on which the man is standing.

Before leaving this subject it would be as well, perhaps, to point out that quantity is apt to dazzle one and make one oblivious to quality. If trick photography is mentioned, the mind at once flies to "King Kong," "The Invisible Man," "The Thief of Baghdad," and now "Dr. Cyclops." Without in any way belittling the achievement of the producers of these films, it is true to say that the individual trick shot in an otherwise straight film is, as a rule, far more difficult to detect or fathom, and probably far more difficult to shoot than anything in "Topper." As a single example, I would quote the map shot in the Astaire-Rogers film, "The Story of Vernon and Irene Castle."

In films, distance can only be judged by size. A big set a long way off looks the same as a small set near to. The crocodile is quite close to the camera, the humans a long way off, so they appear as midgets. The dividing line between the two parts of the set is along the top of the rock.





No trick work about this shot. The steps are simply over-size. But it might be noted that, assuming that the muscles of the midgets were relatively as efficient as those of full-grown men, they would not have to climb laboriously up ten-inch stairs, as they do in the film.

"Men of the Lightship," recently released, is a remarkably fine documentary film by the G.P.O. Film Unit, done in the style of "North Sea." If this is a fair example of recent documentaries, there are grounds for hope that the movement is waking up again after several years of mediocrity. The characters in the film are played, with one exception, by real seamen, not actors. But this, which frequently is responsible for the pitfall of self-conscious acting, has been quite successful on this occasion. It is due to the combined effect of a careful script which avoids all scenes likely to be difficult to act, and to the fact that the director was used to directing people and actors as opposed to merely cameras.

Effective use has been made of models in this film, and this in itself is uncommon in documentaries. There are two minor criticisms to make. The first is that the film as a whole is a little too long, in particular the opening sequence of sighting and destroying a stray mine. This sequence has little reference to the main theme of the film, being intended presumably to show that mine destruction is part of the normal job to lightshipmen. The sequence appearing at the very beginning, and being several hundred feet long, leaves the impression that it is going to lead up to the main theme, which it doesn't.

The other criticism is that a wrong impression is left of the fate of the lightship's crew. We see them approach the coast in their small boat almost exhausted. We see them make a final effort as they sight the coast. And so we leave them —imagining that they reached shore safely. Several minutes later we are shown a shot of an upturned boat and a floating corpse and are told that the men were drowned.

Acting With Puppets in Trick Films

(*Continued from page* 165)

The plate is then removed for use later.

Covering the "Stage" with the black cloth and using the set as a mask, the first exposure showing the actions of the children is then made. A further fixed length of film is then exposed, the children being out of the picture. The film is wound back, the model illuminated and, with the black cloth behind the opening on which the first exposure was made, animation of the seated doll is carried out by single picture exposure. (Adjustment of focus is, of course, made to suit the model set).

The film is now wound back for a second time to the point at which the children ran out of the picture. The exact point is unimportant as, after development, the film can be cut and spliced to eliminate any dead frames.

Using the markings on the glass plate, a mask is cut and inserted in Stage B, the opening covering the area occupied by the doorway only. The black cloth was in position in the doorway and in the second exposure behind Stage C, so the emulsion at this point is still unaffected.

The second doll is now introduced, coming round the "doorway"—in the mask—to join in the farewells, stop motion again being used to animate the doll. Careful cutting between the two shots is required to complete the effect.

It is hoped that the examples described will show the reader something of the possibilities of this fascinating form of cine work. The variations are endless and no doubt when once a start is made, many new ideas on similar lines will present themselves for development.

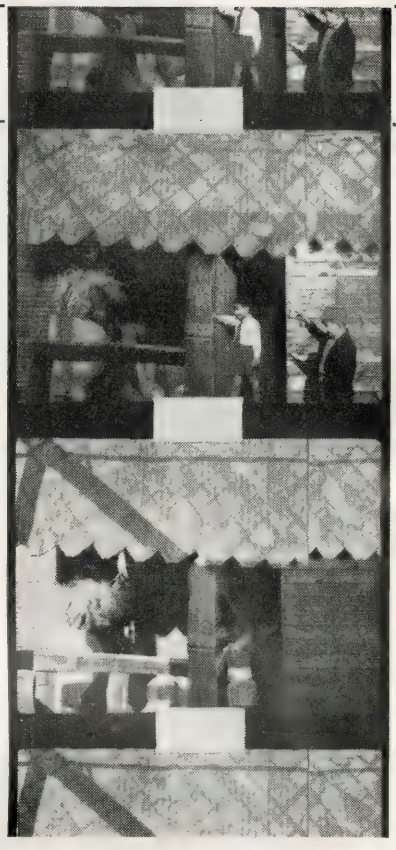


Fig. 3.

In conclusion, a few fundamental rules may be mentioned which should be borne in mind when dealing with this type of work.

First, in double exposure work, take your human actors first. It is difficult to time their actions exactly, whereas the second exposure, whether on a still set or incorporating animation, the timing can easily be arranged to suit the first exposure.

Using foreground models, inclusion of the ground between the models and the actors must be avoided. This would disclose the fact that the model is in front of the actors, and the object is usually to convey the impression that your actors are on or in front of the set. The choice of a low camera position and cutting off the picture "at the knees" will eliminate the ground, or a foreground model of "rocks" or "grass" can be used to achieve the same result.

In combining real life with models, perspective must be watched. Matters are simplified if the camera is kept fairly level. If it is remembered that a level line through the camera lens passes on to the horizon, this "eye-level" can be marked on Stage B or C. It is then only necessary to see that the eye-level or horizon lines coincide in each exposure. Exaggerated camera angles introduce complications but these can be dealt with as experience is gained.

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Technical development runs along somewhat narrow and well defined lines, and frequently two entirely different schools of thought can exist side by side on problems which are almost identical. A case in point is the design of enlargers and of cine titlers. For many years enlargers were of the type in which the rays emitted were projected in a horizontal direction, the negative enlarged from and the easel surface both being vertical. The same practice exists today with cine titling outfits.

Vertical Titling

Chiefly in conjunction with the advent of the miniature camera, there has been a considerable interest in enlargers working in a vertical direction, the surfaces of both negative and easel being in horizontal planes. It is common practice for all the component parts to be attached to and positioned by one common pillar, an arrangement which has obvious technical advantages. It is also used in titling outfits, but these are primarily designed for horizontal working. Those intended for vertical working, such as the excellent Ensign Titler, are supported on more than one pillar. The one exception to this rule is the Wizard Super Titler, which was marketed in this country by Cinique, Ltd. This was all metal, with one common pillar.

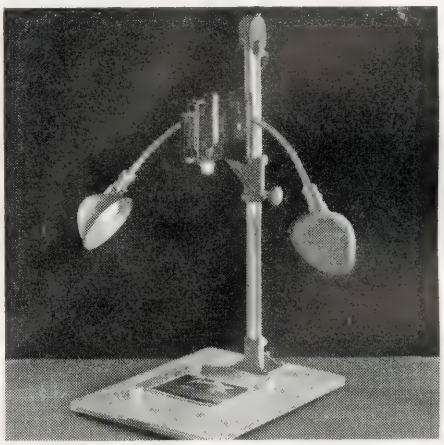
It has, however, been left to Kodak, Ltd., to realise that the requirements of the vertical enlarger and the vertical titler are so closely similar that the one instrument can perform both functions without loss of efficiency in either. Briefly, the Kodak vertical enlarger consists of what may be termed a 'foundation equipment' to which can be added certain other accessories so that the complete assembly functions either as an enlarger, or as a vertical copying bench on which can be used either a still or cine camera.

Enlargements from Cine Film

The apertures in the enlarger head permit accommodation of negatives up to $3\frac{1}{4}''$ x $2\frac{1}{4}''$, and there is a range of 7 glassless negative carriers in sizes from 24 x 36mm. up to $3\frac{1}{4}''$ x $2\frac{1}{4}''$, but the cinematographers will be most interested in the combination negative carrier—which hoods the negative in a sandwich between two optically flat glass sheets—because in this carrier he will be able to accommodate his sub-standard cine film, either negative or positive, from which he desires to make enlargements.

If he is enlarging from reversal positive he will be able to project on to negative material —preferably a plate—and to use quite fast material if desired, as the lamp house is perfectly light-tight. Furthermore, the fact that the enlarger takes negatives up to $3\frac{1}{4}''$ x $2\frac{1}{4}''$ will enable him to secure really big final enlargements in two stages, i.e., once from sub-standard up to $2\frac{1}{4}''$ x $3\frac{1}{4}''$ negative, and the second stage anything up to 7 diameters enlargement from the negative. Sub-standard negative film he will enlarge in one operation.

Three lens and condenser combinations for use with the various sizes of negative are provided. These are respectively 2″, 3″ and 4″, with a similarly numbered condenser to be used with each lens. It is possible to enlarge up to 16 diameters direct from sub-standard film. Even greater degrees of enlargement are made possible by rotating the enlarger head through an angle of 90 degrees and projecting the image in a horizontal direction on to a wall or easel.



The Kodak enlarger, ready for use as a titler.

Incidentally, this arrangement might possibly be used for back projection of 'still' transparencies in conjunction with table-top and cartoon cinematography.

Kodachrome workers will be particularly interested in the Transparency Holder for 35mm. 'Kodachrome' Transparencies which can be obtained for use with this instrument for the purpose of securing separation negatives from the colour originals.

For titling and copying purposes the instrument can rapidly be transformed.

Light is obtained by a pair of units consisting of two semi-circular hoods, each at the extremity of a flexible armoured tube, joined together in the centre by a saddle which fits to the bracket. Any desired lights may be used, i.e., ordinary pearl lamp for 'still' copying and photofloods for cine titling. Owing to the manner in which all the component parts of the apparatus can be locked up solid, this is a most suitable outfit for cartoon work, and by working from the same side as the pillar, the cartoonist can always

(*Continued on next page*)

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see his original picture in correct vertical relation.

The instrument is primarily designed to be used in conjunction with the Magazine Cine Kodak, but will easily accommodate other cameras. The flexible goose-neck supports for the light give a considerable range of light control, and it should even be possible to light relief objects satisfactorily.

There is, of course, no need to descant upon the advantages of the horizontal easel surface in titling and cartoon work. Suffice it to say that even light and flimsy letters and masks can be simply dropped into position without the need for fixing and pinning, and are susceptible of instant movement when required. It is for this reason that the professional cartoon camera set-up provides for horizontal placing of the 'cells' during shooting. It is quite easy to fit them over the register pins when they are horizontal, but it would be impracticable to pin each panel up separately in a vertical position.

Another advantage is the comparative ease with which camera set-up can be checked by a simple plumb-line when it is operating in a vertical direction. This is particularly important if it is desired to take advantage of the movement of the carriage up and down the vertical pillar to secure trucking title shots.

It should be emphasised again that, with all its varied functions (some of these have not been touched upon as being outside the immediate interest of the cinematographer), this is in no sense a makeshift instrument, with drawbacks consequent upon its embodiment of multiple functions. It does first class work as titler and as enlarger.

The basic enlarger outfit costs £32 and embodies the basic outfit, lamphouse, bellows assembly, one condenser, lamp and glassless negative carrier, but not any lens. The copying lights, without lamps, cost a further £3 15 0, and the special Kodachrome Transparency Holder is also £3 15 0.

Round The Societies

Reports for the October issue should reach us not later than August 29th.

WHAT would you use to represent flesh on puppets? Putty, modelling clay? **Luxor Films** (Hon. Sec.: Aylwood Dares, 106, Hodford Road, Golders Green, London, N.W.11) would like to know. The puppets, of a metal structure, are intended to represent living people. They are five inches high, with ball and socket joints at shoulders, elbows, wrists, etc. The 'flesh' covering for them must, of course, be entirely pliable. Many different substances have been tried, but all have been rejected after test.

The difficulty is delaying production of the film, "Strange Tactics," one reel Kodachrome puppet picture. One member, now engaged on finishing the script, has already viewed over 8,000 ft. of professional puppet productions. Projection evenings of 16mm. sound puppet films, borrowed from various private libraries, have been presented by Harry Munday, the studio apparatus being demonstrated afterwards by the president, Denys Davis.

Inability to obtain a suitable electric motor for the camera drive held up production for several weeks, but it has now been secured, and preliminary camera tests have proved reasonably satisfactory. Visitors are welcome to watch the film being shot.

* * *

The sacrifices made by his parents to keep their son at school is the theme of "Conversazione," forthcoming film by **West London Film Productions** (Hon. Sec.: A. F. Shave, 14, St. Lukes Road, Westbourne Park, W.11). Sets are now being built.

Shooting of "Death Plays Whist" has been completed and the editing is almost finished. New premises have been acquired in King Street, Hammersmith, and there is work for all in renovating them. Regular correspondence is being kept up with members in the Forces, and those still at home are trying to keep things going for their return. At one time there were some doubts about the club being able to continue but fortunately new members have come along of late.

* * *

The Hyde public library was featured in the first day's shooting of "For All Tastes," 9.5mm. documentary film being made by the **Hyde C.S.** (Hon. Sec.: E. A. Schoolden, 'Edenhurst,' 200, Dowson Road, Hyde). On a second visit, five more spools were the day's 'bag.' Members had an interesting evening lately when they visited a super cinema and were allowed to browse around the giant Ross projectors and other gear.

The society wishes to point out that other societies borrowing films and having nothing to offer in exchange, simply pay postage both ways, and not 2/6 per reel, as previously announced. New titles recently added are: "Thirsty Work" (film about rabbit shooting, 200 ft., 9.5mm.) and "Derek's Dilemma" (comedy, 180 ft., 9.5mm.).

Congratulations to G. Wain, former secretary, who has been elected to the associateship of the R.P.S.

* * *

Welcome to a new society, the **Erith C.S.**, which meets at 64, Colindale Avenue, Erith, on the first and third Friday of the month. Anyone interested in photography or cinematography is invited. Full particulars from the Hon. Sec.: K. A. Oman, 82, Rydal Drive, Bexleyheath, Kent.

* * *

And here is another new society: the **Northern Polytechnic F.S.**—the third in a month (Luxor Films made their bow in our columns last month). Membership of about twenty and, of course, newcomers will be welcomed with open arms, whether they have experience or not. The annual subscription is 10/-, and meetings are held every Wednesday at 7 p.m.

The society intends to produce one film a year, the shooting to be done in the summer, preparatory work and set building in the winter. Work has already begun on the first film, "Knitting," not (the producers are at pains to tells us) a treatise on sock and jumper production, but a psychological study of a jewel thief who is driven to suicide after committing a murder. "Rather gloomy, perhaps, but we hope it will be worth looking at." It seems to us, however, that if the producers have to tell us that the film is not what we think it is, then the main title is wrong.

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The quality of the personnel augurs well for the success of the production. The cameramen, Messrs. Gilbert and Roberts, are both lecturers at the London Film School, and sound recording and direction are being undertaken by Mr. Pruden, who worked so successfully for the Eltham C.S. Shooting has already begun.

An interesting evening was spent recently at the Planet Cine Society's studio at Palmer's Green, and films by this club and the Eltham C.S. have been shown. On another evening, voice and 'scream' tests were made, when male members learned with wonder how easy it is for ladies to scream without provocation. Full details of the society may be obtained from the Hon. Sec. : A. C. Pierson, Northern Polytechnic, Holloway, London, N.7.

* * *

Planet's last public presentation until more settled times was held at their studio in July when "Thin Air," their recently completed sound film, was screened. Supporting films included "Imp's Playground," a fictional documentary by two members, L. Minter and R. Dale, John Martin's now historic "Man on the Road," and two films by the Beckenham C.S. Details of present activities may be obtained from the Hon. Sec., H. Roger Dale, 72, Wellington Road, Bush Hill Park, Enfield, Middlesex.

* * *

A film commentary in verse, specially written and very precisely timed, was a feature of a 400 ft. film, "The Soul of India," forming part of the programme of the recent annual meeting show of the **Amateur Cine Society of India** in Bombay. Each shot had to be very carefully measured in split seconds before the poet could produce verses which fitted the screen pictures ; even so, very many showings and amendments to the verses, and some intricate film editing, had to be done before the verses fitted exactly and flowed smoothly to the accompaniment of carefully selected background music.

"Soul of India" is a cavalcade of Indian life, showing the search for the spiritual side. In the second half, when this "soul" is found, the picture burgeons into colour, and the music also changes in style. A special solo to the air of "The Holy City" was written as a curtain raiser. The verse was written by the retiring president, R. S. Harper Collins, and the film produced by S. Jepson, a former president, so it was virtually a society production.

A CAUSE & CURE OF SCRATCHES

To the Editor, "Amateur Cine World."

Sir,—The bogey of film scratches dogs the path of most of us, and many and varied are its causes. Until recently I was very much plagued with them and found, surprisingly enough, that, in my own case, they were due to over-zealous care of the projector. The brush I used for cleaning the gate had caused small abrasions. I therefore discarded it and now use a pipe-cleaner instead. Obstinate specks of dust can usually be shifted by soaking the pipe-cleaner in carbon tetrachloride.

Another advantage of the pipe-cleaner is that it is easy to introduce into the gate mechanism. The machine should be set running but with the still picture device in operation so that the current of air blows away the dislodged dust.

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9.5mm. SOUND FILMS. "Juggernaut" (6) £10 2 4, "Q Ships" (6) £10 0 0, "She Shall have Music" (6) £10 11 4, "Betty and the Little King" £1 6 8, "Making Stars" £1 8 0, "Blow Me Down" £1 9 0, "I Yam What I Yam" £1 6 4, "Ocean Tempest" £1 15 4, "Variety No. 22" £1 14 4, "Jungle Trails" (2) £3 15 0, "Thy Friend the Dog" (2) £3 17 0, "Little Known England" £2 1 8. Many other sound films at 33 1/3rd off catalogue prices, including drama, comedy, cartoon and interest. Write for complete list.
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16mm. Cine-Kodak Model "BB" with f/1.9 lens. Also "W" mount and yellow filter. £14 14 0—Messrs. Sheffield Photo Co., Ltd., 6, Norfolk Row (Fargate), Sheffield, 1.

Snip—16mm. De Vry Talkie Projector, 1,000w. or 750w. interchanging, maltese cross theatre action sprocket film drive—no claws, double exciter lamps, 1,600ft., adjustable silent speed to suit own films, large super power amplifier, beautiful outfit, built to last a lifetime, now listed £245 ; like brand new. —First £95—below

16mm. RCA Talkie Camera, turret head, silent or sound, takes Kodak films, makes personal talkies as easily as silent filming. Beautifully made and produces perfect Talkies of RCA "High Fidelity" quality, now listed £145, unmarked—First £75. Gorse, 86, Accrington Rd., Blackburn.

WANTED

Wanted for Cash. Good projectors, films and accessories. Penrose Cine Ltd., 69, Streatham Hill, London. Phone Tulse Hill 6756.

Dekko 9.5mm. Camera, Dallmeyer f/1.9. Perfect condition. Listed £14. Offer nearest £10 secures bargain. Thompson, Rosebank, Royds Avenue, Accrington.

Bell & Howell Filmo outfit. Projector model ST. 750 watt lamp, case, like new. Filmo 70 Camera, Cooke f/3.5 lens, two speeds, case £45. 49a, Corn Exchange, Leeds.

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8mm. Camera, Kodak, f/1.9 focussing ; Combination case and filter. As new, £12. List £16 15 6. R. L. Hoult, Belmont, Menston, Leeds.

TITLING

Personal. 9.5mm. Titles—Threepence. "Effects." Discount ; Latest List. Evans, Cine-publicity, Dereham, Norfolk.

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Amateur Comedy with War-Time Plot

(*Continued from page* 171)

better to savour the joke. It would be advisable not to have the bull rush out immediately after him, because the audience would at first assume that he had fallen foul of a cow ; the fact that he has gone to induce a milk yield from a bull is an added and unexpected surprise. So give them time to note the fact.

So many amateur comedies that we have seen fail because they are less complete films than filmed synopses ; the essential action is shot from one angle throughout, so that it appears remote, as would the incident described above were it not broken up into several shots and some effort made to establish character.

The conclusion of "Call It a Day" rather lacks conviction. When the young men throw up their job in disgust, they also throw a coat over the farmer, who is apparently immobilised under it and they walk off, leaving him a black dump, presumably thoroughly discomforted. Surely this would never get past the Hays office! The men brought their miseries on themselves. The farmer should have remained imperturbably triumphant right to the end—virtue triumphant and vice cast down.

One feels, too, that he might have been much more of a martinet, less agreeably disposed towards them. His accommodating demeanour, indeed, makes his discomforture at the end unwelcome to the audience and reflects adversely on the other characters. They are fools, certainly, but they should not be malicious fools.

At the last they are shown marching off down the road in parody of the military style, with somewhat feebly facetious attempts to put a snap into it. This, too, strikes a false note. It indicates that they are still as spineless as ever they were, no good to themselves or to the Army. In this they are distasteful, not amusing, characters. The audience looks for a manifest change of heart in them, an indication that they have learnt their lesson.

Despite its faults, the film is amusing and a Leader has been awarded for it, but more for the theme than for the treatment. We would strongly urge that the authors have another shot at it.

SAVE YOUR SPOOLS !

From Lieut.-Commdr. R. L. Tufnell, M.P.

Sir,—There must be many of your readers who, like myself, have found, on searching their attics, that they possess quantities of discarded reels. It occurred to me that these would be a valuable addition to the demands of the Government for raw material or could be used up again by the manufacturers and so save material. On further enquiries I gathered that these old reels would be of greatest use to the Ministry of Supply and they have made arrangements with the Kodak Company to recover such reels.

As a result the trade has already been circularised asking dealers and photo finishers to accept used reels from their customers and return them to the company. Possibly, however, this notification has not reached amateur cinematographers and I would like to suggest through your columns that here is a way in which we can greatly help the State by contributing our discarded reels.

House of Commons. R. L. Tufnell.

Did You Guess ?

(*Answer to Problem on page* 171)

"DUNNING." Briefly the process is as follows. First a ballroom set full of dancing couples (but not with Deanna Durbin and partner) was shot. This scene was mixed, either in the camera or optically, into a shot taken from the same place of the ballroom quite empty. The effect so far is of a full ballroom in which after a while all the dancers slowly fade out.

A special "Dunning" print is made of this scene. This is a print which has been dye-toned to a particular shade of red. In other words, densities are now represented by greater or lesser thickness of red dye, high lights still remaining transparent celluloid. Blue light, being of the complementary colour, is affected by such a print in exactly the same way as by a silver-image print—the thicker the dye the less blue light is transmitted. But to red light of the same hue, the print might just as well be transparent celluloid, for the red dye transmits this coloured light just as easily as transparent celluloid.

The print is now threaded into a special camera with double magazines in contact with a fresh piece of panchromatic negative, and between the lens and the fresh stock. In the studio is erected a large blue screen and in front of this Deanna Durbin and her partner dance, they being lighted with red light. Consider all the light reaching the camera from the backing. It is blue, and therefore will print an image of the ballroom on to the raw negative, the camera acting like a printer. But where the dancers are, they obscure the blue screen, and only red light reaches the camera from this area.

Such light is unaffected by the Dunning print, and therefore the lens of the camera forms an image of the dancers on the raw stock in the normal way. This image obviously will not fade when the other dancers fade, and therefore they will be left dancing in an empty ballroom. It should be noted that care was taken in shooting this scene that there were no dancers in front of Deanna Durbin and her partner during the period of the fading out, otherwise they would have ghosted.

Sound Film Programmes

(*Continued from page* 164)

substandard sound-on-film would do well to turn his attention to the Monthly Film Bulletin of the British Film Institute, 4, Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1. This Government-sponsored publication reviews accurately and adequately all new films which are produced in this country or which come into it for public consumption. Under the heading of "Educational Films" it not only reviews 35mm. productions but also indicates if substandard copies are available, in what sizes and whether sound or silent, or both. Direct substandard productions of sufficient general interest are also reviewed.

The reader should not be discouraged by the heading "Educational Films" as many of the films reviewed are that type of fascinating interest picture in the making of which some British directors excel. The review also includes notes as to the sources of supply and the purchase or hire rates. The films come from all parts of the world, and a single number of the Bulletin includes reviews of films from all parts of England, from Russia and from various parts of the U.S.A.

It will be seen that a wide range of choice exists, which would enable the discriminating user to build up very many interesting programmes.

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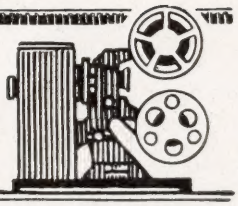

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